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THE  
LIFE  
OF  
FENELON,  
*ARCHBISHOP OF CAMBRAY.*

BY  
CHARLES BUTLER, Esq.

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LONDON :

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1810.

*Quare quis tandem me reprehendat, si quantum cæteris ad festos ludorum dies celebrandos, quantum ad alias voluptates, et ad ipsam requiem animi et corporis conceditur temporis: quantum alii tempestivis conviviis, quantum aleæ, quantum pilæ, tantum mihi egomet ad hæc studia recolenda sumpsero.*

*Cic. pro Archia.*

*Le changement d'étude, et toujours un delassement pour moi.*

*D'Aguesseau.*

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TO  
THE RIGHT REVEREND  
HENRY LORD BISHOP OF NORWICH,

THIS  
ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF FENELON,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

By his LORDSHIP'S

Most obedient and most humble servant,

*CHARLES BUTLER.*

*By the same Author.*

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THE  
LIFE OF FENELON.

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CHAP. I.

*PRINCIPAL WRITERS OF THE LIFE OF FENELON.*

WITH the name of Fenelon, the most pleasing ideas are associated. To singular elevation both of genius and sentiment, he united extreme modesty and simplicity; unconquerably firm in every thing which he considered a duty, he displayed, both on great and ordinary occasions, a meekness, which nothing could discompose. In the midst of a voluptuous court, he practised the virtues of an anchorite; equally humble and elegant, severe to himself

and indulgent to others, a mysterious holiness hangs on his character and attracts our veneration, while his misfortunes shed over him a tinge of distress, which excites our tenderest sympathy.

Not long after his decease, a short account of his life was published by the chevalier Ramsay, who had been the preceptor of Prince Charles, the son of our James the second. The chevalier Ramsay passed several years in the strictest intimacy with Fenelon, and, after Fenelon's decease, was entrusted by his family, with his papers. In 1734, a great nephew of Fenelon published memoirs of him, which are short, but contain some curious details. A third account of the life of Fenelon was published in 1787, by father Querbeuf, an ex-jesuit. In 1808, a life of Fenelon was published in three volumes octavo, by M. de Bausset, bishop of Alais at the beginning of the French Revolution, and afterwards member of the imperial chapter of the church of St. Denis at Paris. He

seems to have had access to all the papers in the possession of the family of Fenelon, which could be of use to him, in the composition of his work. From the work of M. de Bausset, the following account of the life of Fenelon is principally extracted.

## CHAP. II.

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### *FAMILY OF FENELON.*

THE village of Salignac, from which the family of Fenelon took its title, lies at the distance of about two leagues from Sarlat. In 1460, it was raised to a Barony. On the decease of Anthony de Salignac, governor of Peregord and Limousin under John d'Albrêt, King of Navarre, it descended to his eldest son, and, on the decease of that son without issue male, it descended to his daughter and heiress. She married into the house of Birlo, and on her marriage it was stipulated that the descen-

dants of it should use the surname and arms of Salignac, with their family surname and arms. The surname of Salignac was also used by the younger son of Anthony de Salignac. From him, Fenelon, the subject of these pages, lineally descended. Bernard, his great grandfather, was sent ambassador by the court of France to Queen Elizabeth; and history mentions to his honour, that, when he was desired by his court to justify to her the massacre at Paris on St. Bartholomew's day, he refused the unwarrantable commission.

Francis de Salignac de la Mothe Fenelon, whose life is now presented to the reader, was a son, by a second marriage, of Pons de Salignac, count of La Mothe Fenelon. The marquis de Fenelon, his uncle, took on himself the charge of his education. The marquis's character appears to have been truly respectable. The great Condé used to say of him, that "he was equally qualified for conversation, for the field, and for the cabinet." An idea may

be formed of the openness of his disposition, and the austerity of his principles, by what he said to M. de Harlai, on his nomination to the archbishoprick of Paris; —“ there is a wide difference, my right reverend Lord, between the day, when the nomination to such an office brings to the party the compliments of the whole kingdom, and the day, on which he appears before God, to render him an account of its administration.” M. Olier, the founder of the congregation of St. Sulpice, engaged the marquis in an extraordinary project. The law of duelling, was once, in France, as it was once in most other kingdoms of Europe, a part of the civil jurisprudence of the country. In 1547, a duel was fought by the count Guy Chabot and the count of Chaterguer-ai, in the presence of Henry the second and his court. The count of Chaterguer-ai was mortally wounded; his death affected the monarch so much, that he solemnly vowed not to permit another duel. Cardinal Richelieu repressed duel-

ling, by some extraordinary examples of severity; after his death, it burst out with great fury. M. Olier conceived a plan of supplying the insufficiency of the law, by putting honor in opposition to itself. With this view, he formed an association of gentlemen of tried valour, who, by a writing signed with their hands, to which the solemnity of an oath was to be added, were to oblige themselves never to give or accept a challenge, and never to serve as seconds in a duel. The marquis of Fenelon was placed at the head of the association; and no one was admitted into it, who had not eminently distinguished himself in the service. On the sunday of Pentecost, in the year 1651, in the midst of an immense concourse, they assembled in the church of St. Sulpice, and put into the hands of M. Olier, a solemn instrument, expressing their firm and unalterable resolution, never to be principals or seconds in a duel, and to discourage duelling to the utmost of their power. The great Condé was struck

with the proceeding ; “ A person,” he said to the marquis of Fenelon, “ must have the opinion which I have of your valour, not to be alarmed at seeing you the first to break the ice on such an occasion.”

Lewis the fourteenth seconded the views of the respectable pastor : he took a solemn oath not to pardon a duel, and in the course of his reign, published several severe laws against duelling : by the last of them he established a court, composed of the marshalls of France, to hear and determine all cases of honour. They were invested with ample powers, and the severest penalties were inflicted on those, who should give or accept a challenge, or otherwise disobey their decrees. Still duelling continued ; and the ordinance was eluded, by the distinction between duel and rencontre : the latter was supposed to be unpremeditated, and was therefore held not to fall within the laws against duelling, which was supposed to be premeditated. To prevent this evasion, Lewis the fifteenth published



his ordinance of 1723, which, after confirming the laws of his predecessors against duels, provided, that though the rencontre were quite sudden and unpremeditated, the aggressor should be punished with death. But this ordinance had little effect. At length good sense came to the aid of law ; so that towards the end of that monarch's reign, a duel was no longer essential to a character for personal honour and bravery. The law of duel once also made a part of the english jurisprudence. In 1651, a duel was awarded by the court of chivalry between Donald Lord Rea, and Mr. David Ramsay, and all the preliminaries of place, time, and weapons were adjusted by his majesty's letters patent ; but, a few days before the combat was to have taken place, his majesty, by a letter, addressed to the lord constable and lord marshall, revoked his letters patent, and enjoined the parties not to proceed to combat.

Duelling was never so common in England as on the continent. It was a common

observation of foreigners, that many circumstances and expressions pass as matters of course in England, which would be considered heinous offences among them. They attribute it to the roughness of our political discussions in the house of commons, which influence more than we ourselves are aware of, our manners in private life. The only circumstance which occurs in the jurisprudence of England, of a person condemned capitally for a duel, is the case of Major Oneby, reported by sir John Strange, (page 766,) and that case was attended with circumstances of particular aggravation. The major prevented his execution by laying violent hands on himself, in the night which was to precede it.

## CHAP. III.

*THE YOUTH OF FENELON.*

A. D. 1651. ÆT. 1.

**F**RANCIS de Salignac de la Mothe Fenelon, archbishop of Cambray, was born in the castle of Fenelon, in Peregord, on the sixth day of August, 1651. M. de Bausset informs us, that the early years of Fenelon were distinguished by many traits, both of courage and moderation, which were surprising in a child, and which we should read with pleasure, even in the life of a person less eminent. We wish he had communicated some of them to his readers, as every trait, indicating a future Fenelon, must be interesting. The same author in-

forms us that Fenelon acquired, at a very early age, that charm of style, which so particularly marks his writings. As soon as his years permitted, he embraced the ecclesiastical state. At this important part of the life of Fenelon M. de Bausset stops to give a general view of the church of France at that period : we shall select from it the most striking parts of his account of the great rival bodies, the jesuits and jansenists.

“ The institute of the jesuits,” says M. Bausset, “ to which no other institution ever was or ever could be compared, for the energy, foresight, and depth of design, with which it was planned and conducted, was calculated to embrace in its vast functions, all the orders and classes of society, and all the elements that make a part of its civil or religious powers. Versed in every species of knowledge, its members derived from it, that consideration which superior talents and knowledge seldom fail to confer. The confidence which roman catholic govern-

ments placed in the jesuits, and the success of their general scheme of education, threw the instruction of youth almost exclusively into their hands. The severity of their manners, their temperance, their personal decency and disinterestedness, did them honour as religious men and citizens. These were never contested by their enemies ; and they were a complete refutation of the charges of loose morality, so often imputed to them. The organization of the body was so perfect, that it neither had youth nor age. Immediately on its appearance, it formed establishments in every catholic state, attacked the descendants of Luther in all their subdivisions, and founded missions in the east, in the wilds of America, in the Indies, in China, and in Japan. At the end of two centuries the order was in full vigour of maturity."

" By what spirit of frenzy," exclaims M. Bausset, " did it happen, that the roman catholic governments, whom they served so well, deprived themselves of such useful

defenders ? The silly and laughable charges against the jesuits, which were made a pretence for their dissolution, are now scarcely remembered. But it is recollected, that their accusers dealt in general charges ; and that while the heaviest accusations were brought against the whole body, nothing was proved against individuals. In every part of catholic Europe, public instruction ceased on the banishment of the jesuits ; this is equally acknowledged by their enemies and their friends.”

Such is M. Bausset’s account of the jesuits, and such, to this hour, is the general language of roman catholics in their regard.

He then presents his readers with a view of the jansenists, confining it chiefly to those, who, from their residence in the convent of Port-royal or its neighbourhood, or from connections with them, obtained the appellation of Portroyalists.—In every æra of the christian religion, the learned and the idle have attempted to sound the

abyss of grace and predestination, and consumed their time in vain efforts to reconcile, with the infinite wisdom and goodness of the deity, the moral and natural evils which he foresees, and decrees, or permits. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, Michael Baius, the parent of jansenism, a theologian of Louvain, was engaged in these abstruse speculations, and published a treatise on grace, which was condemned at Rome, and retracted by its author. He was supposed to allow too much to grace, and too little to free will. Molina, a spanish jesuit, entered the lists against him, and was accused of the opposite error. The cause was carried to Rome ; a congregation of cardinals was appointed to hear it : in the space of ten years, it was argued before them two hundred times ; but the congregation broke up without coming to a resolution on any of the points submitted to them. Undismayed by their want of success, Jansenius, bishop of Ipres, after twenty-two years study, composed a large volume

on the subject, in which, if he did not adopt the system of Baius, he adopted a system directly opposite to that of Molina. The jesuits and their adherents attacked his work: five propositions were extracted from it, not as existing in it literally, but as containing the essence or ultimate tendency of its doctrines. They were formally condemned by the Pope, and the universal church acquiesced in their condemnation. But the advocates of Jansenius rallied: they admitted that the propositions were erroneous, but denied that any of them were contained in the writings of Jansenius, or were fairly inferable from his principles. This most important point, whether an ill-written book, of an obscure flemish prelate, contained five propositions on an unintelligible subject, was the origin of a dispute, which continued for two centuries, and, at different times, convulsed both the church and state of France to their centres: the progress of the controversy will be mentioned in a future part of this work.



Among the jansenists, the family of Arnaud held a distinguished rank. One of that family was abbess of Port-royal, a convent in a solitary uncultivated tract of land in the neighbourhood of Paris ; and several of her relations were members of the community. The celebrated Anthony d'Arnaud, the two Le Maitres, and Le Sacy retired to the same spot, and were followed by several persons of rank and talent. They spent their whole time in prayer and study ; and their writings are amongst the ablest compositions in the french language. Their enemies admitted that they carried it to its perfection, and fixed its standard. The reign of Lewis the fourteenth, so famous for its literary glory, produced no greater writers than those who inhabited the Port-royal solitude. Unfortunately for religion, literature, and science, too much of their time was consumed in advocating the cause of jansenism.

M. de Bausset then proceeds to give an account of the Sulpiciens, a community of

secular priests, far inferior in renown to the Jesuits or jansenists, but not without considerable celebrity in their day.

The account which M. de Bausset gives of them, is most edifying. Avoiding public notice, engaging in no contest, resigning to others those good works which confer celebrity, it was their object to be actively employed in the service of the church in her most obscure and humble functions; and within that modest but useful line of duty, their exertions were uniformly confined. They had numerous establishments in France; and had existed one hundred and fifty years without the slightest abatement of their first fervour, when, at the beginning of the french revolution, they perished in the general wreck of what was most respectable or holy in France. M. de Bausset mentions, as a circumstance greatly to their honour, that during the whole term of their existence, their concerns never once became the subject of a suit at law. To the jesuits, Fenelon was always greatly at-

tached : from the jansenists he always kept at a great distance ; nothing could be more contrary to his disposition, than their gloomy devotion and immoderate severity. His spiritual director, M. Tronson, was superior of St. Sulpice. This circumstance attached Fenelon to the sulpiciens, and his attachment to them continued through his life.

## CHAP. IV.

*FENELON IS ORDAINED PRIEST.*

A. D. 1676. ÆT. 25.

IN the seminary of St. Sulpice, Fenelon was ordained priest : he passed the three following years in absolute retirement ; after which, by the desire of the curate of the parish of St. Sulpice, he delivered, on Sundays and festivals, in the church of the parish, a course of familiar explanations of the old and new testament ; these first made him known to the public. It appears that in the fervour of his zeal, he once intended to transport himself to Canada, and devote his life to the conversion of the savages ; and that afterwards,

on finding his constitution would not endure the cold of that climate, he changed his resolution, and determined to dedicate himself to the missions of the east. M. de Bausset favours us with a letter written by him, under this impression, which shows a mind saturated with religious and classical enthusiasm.

“ Several trifling accidents have delayed, till this moment, my return to Paris ; but now at last, I set off, and I almost fly. With this voyage in my thoughts, I have a greater voyage in contemplation. All Greece opens herself to me ; the sultan retires in a fright ; the Peloponnesus already begins to breathe in freedom. Again, will the church of Corinth flourish ; again will she hear the voice of her apostle. I feel myself transported into these delightful regions ; and, while I am collecting the precious monuments of antiquity, I seem to inhale her true spirit. I search for the Areiopagus, where St. Paul preached the unknown God to the wise of the world.

But after the sacred, the profane comes for her turn, and I do not disdain to enter the Pyreum, where Socrates unfolded the plan of his republic. I ascend the double summit of Parnassus ; I pluck the laurels of Delphos, I breathe the sweets of Tempe.

“ When shall the blood of the Turks lie mingled with the blood of the Persians, on the plains of Marathon, and leave Greece to religion, to philosophy, and to the fine arts, which regard her as their natural soil ?

“ *Arva beata,*

“ *Petamus Arva, divites et insulæ !*

“ O island ! consecrated by the heavenly visions of the beloved disciple ; never shall I forget thee ! On your soil, I will kiss the footsteps of the evangelist, and fancy I behold the heavens open. Then shall I be seized with indignation against the false prophet, who attempted to unfold the oracles of the true prophet ; and return thanks to God, who did not destroy

his church, as he destroyed Babylon ; but chained up the dragon and crowned his church with victory. The schism disappears ;—the east and west are re-united ;—and Asia, after a long night, sees the day return to her. The land consecrated by the cross of Christ, and watered by his blood, is delivered from those, who profaned her, and is invested with new glories.—Finally, the children of Abraham, scattered over the earth and more numerous than the stars of the heavens, are collected from the four winds, and come in crowds to adore the Christ, whose side they pierced on the cross.

“ This is sufficient : you will rejoice to hear this is the last of my letters ; and the last of my enthusiastick flights, with which you will be importuned.

“ FR. DE FENELON.”

While Fenelon lived in this happy state, he contracted an intimate friendship with two persons whose names, like his own,

will reach the latest posterity, Bossuet and the Abbé Fleury. To the former, who was greatly his superior in years, and was then in the zenith of his great reputation, he particularly attached himself. Bossuet, denying himself to all others, used to permit Fenelon and Fleury to accompany him to Germigny, the country residence of the bishops of Meaux. They had stated hours of prayer, private study, and relaxation; and in these last, under the humble name of conversation, the bishop unfolded to them all his sacred and literary stores of knowledge. Nothing could exceed the bishop's regard for Fenelon, or Fenelon's veneration for the bishop. Who does not lament that the union of such men was ever dissolved?



## CHAP. V.

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*FENELON IS EMPLOYED ON THE MISSIONS AMONG  
THE NEW CONVERTED PROTESTANTS.*

A. D. 1685. ÆT. 34.

It appears that Fenelon first attracted the favour of Lewis the fourteenth by his great success in the religious missions, which, on the revocation of the edict of Nantes, were undertaken, by the direction of that monarch, for proselytising the hugonots to the catholic religion, and confirming the faith of the new converts\*.

By the edict of Nantes, Henry the fourth granted to the hugonots, the free exercise of their religion, and placed them nearly on

\* See Appendix, Note 1.

an equality of civil rights with his other subjects. Their pastors were salarised at the expence of the state ; their churches were allowed to choose deputies, who were to hold assemblies for regulating their internal concerns ; and they were permitted to retain some fortified towns, and garrison them with troops of their own persuasion, as a security for the observance of the edict. With some jealousy on the side of the catholics, and some discontent on the side of the hugonots, the edict was observed, during the reign of Henry the fourth, without either party's having any just cause of complaint. The edict was confirmed by his successors immediately after his accession to the throne ; but the hugonots were discountenanced, and had a very small share of the favours of government or the smiles of the court. This naturally encreased their discontent, and their discontent was fomented by the different parties who contended for the favour of the court, and who regularly patronized the hugonots, while

they were in opposition, and regularly neglected them, while they were in administration. At length, the hugonots broke out into open war; they were supported by the english, but the war was soon terminated by the taking of the city of La Rochelle. The hugonots were then obliged to deliver up their forfeited towns: in other respects, the edict remained in force; and it was confirmed to them by Lewis the fourteenth, on his accession to the throne.

But the extinction of the hugonot religion, in every part of his dominions, was one of that monarch's most favorite projects, and, through the whole of his reign, pursued by him with undeviating attention. By his direction, all means of favour and exclusion were put in practice to make proselytes: the ministers of the hugonots were laid under many restraints, in the exercise of their functions; their consistories and synods were seldom allowed to meet; their schools of theology and philosophy were

broken up ; and seven hundred of their churches were taken from them or demolished :—finally, by an edict of the 23<sup>d</sup> of October 1685, Lewis the fourteenth absolutely revoked the edict of Nantes : and, by a second edict of the same day, interdicted wholly to the hugonots, the exercise of their religion, ordered the ministers to quit the kingdom, employed priests to educate the children of the hugonots in the catholic religion, and commanded all the intendants of provinces and governors of towns to cause the edict to be rigidly enforced. Some of them exceeded their instructions, and, under the pretence of preserving the priests from insult, and compelling the attendance of the children at mass and public instruction, distributed soldiers in the principal places inhabited by hugonots, and connived at their outrages. The soldiers were principally taken out of the dragoon companies ; which gave their employment the appellation of the Dragonade. To subtract themselves from

this persecution, two hundred thousand families quitted France, and, dispersing themselves in the protestant states, enriched them with their arts and industry, and made them resound with their execrations of their tyrannical persecutor. It is greatly to the honour both of Fenelon and of Bossuet, that they blamed the use of compulsion in effecting the religious conversion of the hugonots.

“Violence and persecution,” says M. Bausset, “were so contrary to the character and principles of Fenelon, that he condemned, without hesitation, the rigour which some agents of persons in power employed against the peaceable and submissive hugonots. He equally condemned the blind zeal, with which some persons endeavoured to force acts of conformity from those who were not sincerely convinced, but only intimidated and terrified. He knew that this species of conformity must necessarily be rather an act of hypocrisy, than a real act of religion.”

In a letter to the duke of Beauvilliers, Fenelon mentions, that he was informed by public report, that the council on the affairs of the hugonots, to which the duke belonged, was determined on rigorous measures. "That," says Fenelon, "is not the true spirit of the gospel. The work of God is not effected, in the heart, by force." The marshal of Noailles consulted Fenelon on the line of conduct he should pursue, in respect to the hugonot soldiers under his command. In his answer, Fenelon says, "That tormenting and teasing heretic soldiers into conversion will answer no end; it will not succeed; it will only produce hypocrites; the converts made by them will desert in crowds. If an officer, or any other person can insinuate the truth into their hearts, or excite in them a desire of instruction, it is well; but there should be no constraint, no indirect officiousness. When they are ill, a catholic officer may visit them, procure them assistance, and drop on them a few salutary words. If that pro-

duce no good, and the sickness continue, one may go a little further, but softly, and without constraint. One may hint, that the ancient is the best church, and derived to us immediately from the apostles. If the sick person be unable to enter into this, you should be satisfied with leading him to make some acts of sorrow for his sins, and some acts of faith and charity, adding words like these, O my God! I submit to whatever the true church teaches. In whatever place she resides, I acknowledge her for my mother."

The chevalier Ramsay relates, that Fennelon recommended to prince Charles, the son of our James the second, never to use compulsion in matters of religion. "No human power," he said, "can force the impenetrable retrenchments of the freedom of the mind. Compulsion never persuades, it only makes hypocrites. When kings interfere in matters of religion, they don't protect it, they enslave it. Give civil liberty to all, not by approving all religions,

as indifferent, but by permitting in patience what God permits, and by endeavouring to bring persons to what is right by mildness and persuasion.”

The counsel, which Fenelon gave to others, he was himself the first to practise. The province of Poitou was appointed for the scene of his mission. When he was presented to Lewis the fourteenth, the only request he made to the monarch was, that the troops, and every species of military parade, might be removed to a great distance from the province.—We have mentioned that the sentiments of Bossuet on this subject agreed with those of Fenelon; and we add with pleasure, that both the chancellor D’Aguesseau, and the chancellor’s father, the intendant of Languedoc, concurred with them in the same opinion. The latter resigned his office of intendant, rather than witness the dragonade.



## CHAP. VI.

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*FENELOX PUBLISHES HIS TREATISES ON THE  
MISSION OF THE CLERGY, AND FEMALE EDU-  
CATION.*

A. D. 1607. ÆT. 36.

THE object of the first of these treatises is to prove that the great majority of mankind, being of themselves wholly incapable of forming a just judgment on the several articles of the christian faith, divine wisdom could afford them no surer guide to lead them to truth, than a visible authority, deriving its origin from the apostles, and from Jesus Christ himself, and continued through an uninterrupted succession of pastors, to the end of time.—Of all the points in dis-

pute between roman catholics and protestants, this perhaps is the most important. At the celebrated conference between Bossuet and Claude, on the subject of the church, it seems to have been agreed by them, that every point, on which the two churches were divided, would be settled by a decision of this question. Bossuet and Fenelon contended that the roman catholics alone can show an uninterrupted succession of pastors, consecrated by a form, which may be traced to the apostles, while the reformed churches cannot trace their ancestry beyond the sixteenth century. This circumstance of itself is said by them to decide the question in favour of the roman catholic church. The system and the arguments of both are the same; but Bossuet writes for the learned and informed; Fenelon for the simple and uninformed.

His treatise on female education endeared him to every mother and every daughter in France. He observes in it, that the education of a daughter should begin with her

birth, as it is impossible to attend too soon to her physical or mental faculties ; that, in her earliest years, instruction should be conveyed to her, chiefly in narrative ; which is indirect instruction ; but that, even in her very earliest years, her instruction should be solid ; so that nothing should be allowed a place in her faith or exercises of devotion, which is not drawn from the gospel, or which the church does not sanction. She should be accustomed to reject idle histories, and kept from devotions, indiscreetly introduced, and not authorized by the church. The Historical Catechism of Fleury, he mentions in his treatise three times, with great commendation. Of the female character he expresses himself in terms of the highest praise ; “ Women,” he says, “ were designed by their native elegance and gentleness to endear domestic life to man ; to make virtue lovely to children, to spread round them order and grace, and give society its highest polish. No attainment can be above beings, whose end

and aim it is, to accomplish purposes at once so elegant, and so salutary ; every means should be used to invigorate by principle and culture, such native excellence and grace."

## CHAP. VII

*FENELON IS APPOINTED PRECEPTOR TO THE  
DUKE OF BURGUNDY, THE DUKE OF ANJOU,  
AND THE DUKE OF BERRI, THE GRANDSONS  
OF LEWIS THE FOURTEENTH.*

A. D. 1609. ÆT. 38.

FENELON's success in his missions in Poitou completely satisfied the expectations he had raised. Soon after his return from them, he was appointed preceptor to the duke of Burgundy, the duke of Anjou, and the duke of Berri, the three sons of the dauphin.

Whatever were the defects in the character of Lewis the fourteenth, it is allowed that he possessed, in the highest degree, the merit of discovering and employing the

talents of his subjects. Three times in the course of his reign he had to appoint the governors and preceptors of the royal princes; and, on each of these occasions, the appointment did him honour. The education of the dauphin was intrusted to the duke of Mortaurier and Bossuet; and when the dukes of Burgundy, Anjou, and Berri, the sons of the dauphin, arrived at a proper age, he appointed the duke of Beauvilliers their governor.

The duke of Beauvilliers was married to a daughter of the celebrated Colbert; Colbert's two other daughters were married to the dukes of Chevreuse and Mortêmar; all the dukes held charges of importance in the court, and all the writers of the time recount, in their praise, that while they were attentive to please the king, by an anxious discharge of their duties, none of them ever flattered him in his irregularities, or paid court to the objects of his unlawful attachments. Madame de Montespan never, in the long course of her long sway,

saw any of them among her courtiers. In the midst of his wanderings Lewis always shewed sentiments of decency and delicacy: he was struck with the contrast between the dignity of the conduct of this family and the ignoble subserviency of the generality of his courtiers. This circumstance first recommended the duke of Beauvilliers to his favour, and, when the duke of Burgundy reached his eighth year, the monarch appointed the duke of Beauvilliers the governor of the duke of Burgundy and his two brothers, with an unlimited power of nominating all the other officers about them, and all their inferior attendants. The duke immediately appointed Fenelon to the place of preceptor, and Fleury to the place of sub-preceptor. The general impression of Fenelon's character at this time, and the circumstances which immediately led to his appointment, are thus mentioned by the duke de St. Simon.

“The duke de Beauvilliers, a very pious noble man, was a great friend of the congre-

gation of St. Sulpice. On some occasion, he remarked a tall person, with a countenance worn by profound study, with eyes pouring fire like a furnace, and a physiognomy, which no one who had once seen could ever forget. It combined in it, the most opposite traits of character ; but none of them contradicted the other. It had a mixture of gravity and gallantry, of the serious and the gay ; of the doctor in divinity, of the bishop and the high nobleman ; but acuteness, grace, decency, and above all, dignity predominated. It required exertion to cease from gazing on him. Every portrait of him spoke ; but no painter gave an idea of the justness or the harmony of the original, or of the delicacy which marked each feature of his countenance. In his manners, there was a similar relief of opposite qualities ; they were easy, and made every person around him easy ; that fine taste, which only habits of high life can confer, entered, as of its own accord, into his conversation, with a natural, soft, flow-



ing and insinuating eloquence ; a turn of expression, always natural, neat and pleasing, and a singular talent of expressing intelligibly the most abstruse ideas ; an easy flow of wit, the quality and quantity of which, exactly suitable to the person and the occasion for which it was intended, he could turn at pleasure. In company with him, it was impossible to quit him ; when he stole away, it was impossible not to run in search of him.

“ The duke de Beauvilliers was subdued by such an assemblage of agreeable qualities, and wished that madame de Maintenon should share in his admiration. Twice a week she dined at the hotel de Beauvilliers, or the hotel de Chevreuse, and made a fifth with the two sisters and their husbands ; a bell was on the table and no servant admitted, that they might converse without restraint. It was a sanctuary, from which the court was excluded ; but Fenelon was admitted. The purity of his morals obtained for him the esteem of the

title society ; his feeling piety gained him their hearts ; they were enchanted by his spirituality ; so that, when the duke of Beauvilliers was named governor of the duke of Burgundy, with power to appoint the preceptor, he immediately cast his eyes on Fenelon."

No choice was ever more applauded by the public ; --among the letters, which Fenelon received on the occasion, M. de Bausset presents us with one addressed to him by his friend M. Tronson, an extract of which must be acceptable to our readers.

" The education, which his majesty has been pleased to entrust to you, is so connected with the state and the good of the church, that it is impossible for me not to be highly pleased in seeing it put into such good hands. But my joy changes into alarm, when I consider the dangers to which it exposes you. It is true that it gives you an opportunity of doing much good ; but it is also true, that it may occa-

sion your being the cause of much evil. You now live in a country, where the gospel of Christ is little known ; and where, even those acquainted with it, make use of it chiefly to do themselves honour before men. It is not necessary to live a great while in it, to bring yourself to regard, as immoderate and excessive, the maxims, which, when you meditated on them at the foot of the cross, appeared to you clear ; and to think the most obvious and clear duties, doubtful and impracticable. Circumstances will arise in which you will be tempted to think prudence and charity require of you to make terms with the world ; but how strange will it be for a christian, and still more for a priest, to enter into any compromise with the enemy of his salvation ! Truly, sir, your situation is dangerous : confess that it is difficult not to lose yourself in it, and that to conduct yourself in it properly, requires no common virtue. If ever the study and meditation of the scriptures were necessary to you, they are at this

time indispensable. It should seem, that hitherto you have chiefly wanted it for filling your mind with just notions, and nourishing her with the lessons of eternal truth; henceforth you stand in absolute need of it for keeping yourself free from bad impressions, for preserving yourself from falsehood. It is of infinite consequence to you never to lose sight of the terrible moment of death, when the glory of the world will disappear like a dream, and every created object, to whom you would then seek for support, will sink under you."—This was certainly the language of friendship.

## CHAP. VIII.

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*FENELON'S EDUCATION OF THE DUKE OF  
BURGUNDY.*

As the duke of Burgundy was the first of the three royal brothers, in succession to the crown of France, he particularly engaged the attention of Fenelon; his character is thus described by the duke de St. Simon.

“ The duke of Burgundy was born terrible, and during his first years, continued an object of terror. Hardhearted, angry, to the extreme of passion, even against inanimate objects, impetuous to a degree of fury, incapable of bearing the least

opposition to his wishes, even from time or climate, without putting himself into paroxysms of rage that made one tremble for his existence, (a condition in which I have often seen him,) stubborn in the highest degree, passionate in the pursuit of every kind of pleasure, addicted to the gratifications of the table and violent hunting, delighted, to a degree of extacy, with music, and with deep play, in which he could not endure to lose, and in which it was personally dangerous to be engaged with him ; in fine, abandoned to all the passions, and transported by every kind of pleasure ; often ferocious, naturally born to cruelty, barbarous in his raillery, seizing the ridiculous with astonishing justness ; high as the clouds, in his own opinion, considering other men as atoms, with which he had no resemblance, and regarding his brothers, though they were educated on an equality with him, as intermediate beings, between him and the rest of the human race : —But even in his passions, talent beamed

from him: his repartees were surprizing: in his answers, there was always something of justness and depth; he seemed to play with the most abstract subjects; the extent and vivacity of his genius were astonishing: but they always kept him from attending to any one thing at a time, and thus made him incapable of learning any thing.—The prodigy was, that, in a short space of time, religion and the grace of God, made him a new man; and changed those terrible qualities into all the opposite virtues. From the abyss which I have described, there arose a prince, affable, gentle, moderate, patient, modest, humble, austere only to himself, attentive to his duties, and sensible of their great extent. His only object appeared to be, to perform all his actual duties of a son and subject, and to qualify himself for his future obligations.”

Fenelon gave up himself entirely to the duties of his employment; he foresaw, says M. de Bausset, that, with the singular dis-

position which his pupil had received from nature, he would make that rapid progress in science, which none but persons of extraordinary genius can make, and which is not always attainable by the offspring of kings. The difficulty was to subdue the temper, thus forcibly constituted, in such a manner, as to preserve its nobler parts, while all that was too violent in it, was removed. It was the object of Fenelon to place on the throne that perfect form of virtue, which he had in his mind, after the example of the great artists of antiquity, who endeavoured to express in their works, that perfect form of beauty, which they carried with them in idea.

But what care, attention, art, management, observation, and choice of means were necessary to model the prince into such a character !—In entering on his office, Fenelon laid down to himself a rule, to which he rigidly adhered, never to ask of the court a favour for himself, his friends, or his family. His private revenue was



small, and no pecuniary income was attached to his office; our author gives us extracts of letters which shew that, though his establishment was on the smallest scale, it was with difficulty that he found money to answer his current expences. Still he kept the narrowness of his circumstances to himself; he never asked, and till his nomination to the Abbey of St. Valery, at the end of several years after his appointment to his office, he never received a favour from the court. It was more painful to him to refuse the solicitations of his family that he would use his interest at court in their favour. The marchioness de Laval, the only daughter of the marquis de Fenelon, by whom he was educated, requested him to obtain a lieutenancy for her son, then four years old. Fenelon answered her by calling to her recollection his general rule; "I wish," says he, "that consistently with my principles, I could interfere in your son's behalf, but, though my life should depend on it, I would not ask a

favour of the king." He leaves her at liberty to act for herself; but intimates, that her solicitations would be fruitless, as the king never conferred offices on persons in early infancy, but on those whose fathers had been killed in battle. Other letters from him, which are cited by M. de Bausset, speak the same language.

Such a proceeding naturally raised him in the esteem of his pupil. In his general demeanor towards him, Fenelon assumed a conduct, by which, though it were full of condescension and affection, he placed himself at an unmeasureable height above him. Of this, our author gives the following instance. On some occasion, Fenelon had expressed himself to the duke, in a tone of great authority: the duke was indignant; "not so, sir," he said to Fenelon, "I know who I am, and who you are,"—Fenelon made no reply; he put on an air of recollection, and, giving the duke a serious and sorrowful look, retired, and spoke to him no more in the course of the day. The

following morning, Fenelon entered the duke's bed-chamber while he was asleep; ordered the curtains of his bed to be opened, and the duke to be awakened; then, assuming a cool indifferent look, "Sir," he said, "you yesterday told me you knew who you were, and who I was. My duty obliges me to inform you, that you know neither. You imagine that you are greater than I am; this, some valet has told you; but you oblige me to tell you, that I am greater than you. Birth, here, is out of the question. You would pronounce a person mad, who should give himself a preference over his neighbour, because the dews of heaven had fertilized his field and not fallen on his neighbour's. You are not wiser than such a man; if you are vain of your birth, it confers on you no personal merit. You must be sensible that I am your superior in knowledge; I have taught you every thing you know; and, what you know, is nothing in comparison of what remains for me to teach you. With respect

to authority, you have none over me. I have full and absolute authority over you. This, you have been often told by the king. You suppose I consider myself very happy in the honour of being your preceptor. Undeceive yourself; I undertook the charge of you at the king's request; it could be no satisfaction to me to receive so fatiguing an employment. That you may have no doubt on this head, I shall now lead you to the king, and request him to appoint me a successor, whose exertions about you will be more successful than mine."

The duke of Burgundy was thunder-struck with this declaration. Remorse, fear, and shame for a time prevented him from speaking; "I am confounded," he cried, "for my conduct of yesterday. If you speak to the king, I am ruined for ever. If you abandon me, what will be thought of me? I promise you, yes I do promise you, that you shall be satisfied with me in future: But do you promise me."—Fenelon would make no promise; it was not till a long

continuance of good conduct had convinced him of the sincerity of his pupil's repentance, and after a formal intercession of madame de Maintenon, that Fenelon received him into favour.

In one respect, Fenelon was particularly fortunate: every one about the person of the royal prince, looked up to him with veneration, and co-operated in his plans of education. When the duke of Burgundy fell into any of those fits of anger and impatience to which he was so much subject, the governor, preceptor, masters, officers and servants, who attended him, observed a perfect silence. They avoided answering his questions; and either did not look at him, or looked at him with terror, as if they were frightened at being with a person who discovered signs of aberration of intellect, or with pity, as if they beheld a person, whose mental malady made him an object of compassion. His books, every thing used in the way of his instruction were removed from him, as useless to a person

in his deplorable state. They were not restored to him, and none of the parties resumed their general demeanour towards him, till the fit of passion entirely subsided.

It was a rule with Fenelon, to permit the duke to interrupt his studies, whenever he was inclined to enter into any useful and learned conversation. He adopted this plan the more readily, as he found such conversation tended to humanize his pupil, to soften his mind, to make him gentle and compliant, and to call forth his pleasing qualities. But study was resumed the instant the conversation ceased to be useful. So far from lessening the general hours of study, this conduct encreased the duke's ardour for literature, and induced him to dedicate to it a greater portion of his time. Of his own accord, he requested some person might always read to him at his meals.

The fables which Fenelon composed for the duke of Burgundy are admirable. The great object of them appears to be to soften his pupil's manners, and to open his

mind to humanity, beneficence, and the milder virtues. Heaven and earth and all animate and inanimate nature are called into action by them, to invite the future monarch to make justice, peace, and happiness reign on earth.

“ Who is the young hero,” say the songsters of the groves instructed by the shepherds, “ that comes among us, and appears to interest himself in our happiness? He seems pleased with our songs; he loves poetry; it will soften his heart, and make him as amiable as he now appears haughty. May he increase in virtue, as a flower just opened by the spring; may he love the gentle pleasures of the mind; may the graces dwell on his eyes! May Minerva reign in his heart! May he equal Orpheus in the sweetness of his strains, and Hercules in his heroic actions! May he have the valour of Achilles, but none of his ferocity! May he be good, wise, beneficent! May he sympathise with men! He loves our songs; they penetrate his heart as the dew



falls on our gardens parched by the sun. May the gods moderate his passions! May they ever make him happy! May he restore the golden age! May wisdom fill his soul, and spread from it over all mortals! May flowers grow under his feet!"

What an effect, exclaims M. de Bausset, must instructions, arrayed in such charms, have on a prince who was all soul and wit! But then the fables of Melanthos, and the Medal follow, which the royal pupil could not read without sinking into the earth, at the view they gave him of the deformities of his own character, and almost adoring the being, whose hand was stretched out to save him, to rescue him from himself.— "What terrible woe has befallen Melanthos? Outwardly all is right with him; inwardly all is wrong. Last night, he went to rest, the delight of the human race; this morning one's ashamed of him, one must hide him. As he was dressing, a plait of his shirt displeased him; all the long day he is to be in a rage, and every one is to suffer; he



is an object of fear, an object of compassion; he cries as a child, and roars as a lion. A malignant vapour blackens his imagination, as the ink dirties his fingers. Don't speak to him of what gave him delight a moment since; it is enough that he was pleased with it then, that he should not endure it now. The parties of pleasure, which lately he desired so much, now weary him; they must be broken up; he must contradict and irritate and complain of every one; and then is angry that no one will lose his temper with him. When he can find no pretence for being dissatisfied with others, he turns against himself; he blames himself, finds out that he is good for nothing, he despairs of improvement; he takes it ill that persons will not comfort him; he wishes to be alone; then he can't endure solitude, and returns to society, and quarrels with all about him. They are silent, he takes offence at their silence; they speak softly, he supposes they speak against him; they talk in their common

voice, he pretends they talk too much, and is angry that they appear gay while he is sorrowful; they become serious, he considers it a reproach of his faults; they laugh, he supposes it is at him. What must we do? be as steady and as patient as he is insupportable, and expect in peace that to-morrow morning he will be as good as he was yesterday. This strange humour passes off as it comes: when it seizes him one would suppose that a spring of the machine was broken, and the whole run backward. He resembles the picture of a person possessed: his reason is inverted; press him and you may make him say, at full noon, that it is night; for, when the fit is once on him, there is no longer day or night for his dismounted intellects. Don't say to him to-morrow we will go to such a place, to divert ourselves; the man of to-day will not be the same man to-morrow; he, who is now making you a promise, will disappear at the instant, and in his place you'll see a certain something without shape,

without name. It wills, it wills not, it threatens, it trembles, it mixes laughable haughtiness with contemptible littleness ; it cries, it laughs, it plays the fool, it is in a rage. In his fury, however, Melanthos, though wild and mad, and though he do not discover one ray of reason, is witty, is eloquent, is cunning, and abounds in repartee. Be particularly careful to say nothing to him, that is not perfectly just, exact, and reasonable ; he has all his senses about him, to take advantage of it, and put you in the wrong ; on a sudden he becomes reasonable, to show your errors. Then, a fit of distress comes on him ; he loves no one ; he has not a friend ; every one persecutes him, every one betrays him ; he has no obligations to any one ; wait a moment, he seems to be in need of every one ; he is full of affection, he loves every one ; he flatters, insinuates, bewitches those who could not bear him ; he confesses his errors, and laughs at his oddities ; he mimicks himself, and he mimicks himself so well,

that you would think him again in his airs. After this comedy, so perfectly well acted at his own expence, you hope at last the demoniac is gone for ever. Alas ! you are quite mistaken; to night he will again be the demon, and to-morrow he will again laugh at himself, and continue unreclaimed." It was impossible for the royal pupil not to recognize himself in this picture ; or to read it without emotions and resolutions of amendment.

In a fable less serious, but equally instructive, Fenelon describes Bacchus inattentive to the lessons of Silenus, and a faun laughing at his blunders: Bacchus puts on air of dignity, and asks the faun, " how he dares to laugh at the son of Jupiter ;" the faun coolly answers, " why does the son of Jupiter dare to make blunders ?"

The dialogues, which Fenelon composed for the duke of Burgundy, are in a higher style. He brings by them, the most celebrated personages of antient and modern

history before his pupil ; and all the speakers take occasion to mention some incident in their lives, that conveys to him, in few but impressive words, some salutary truth. In every page of them, the charms of the milder virtues are happily pourtrayed ; when vanity or voluptuousness are to be censured, the most pointed ridicule is used ; when tyranny is to be execrated, the strongest language is adopted. A meeting of Cæsar and Cato is supposed :

“ Thou wilt be greatly surprized,” says Cæsar, “ when I inform thee, that I died of the wounds I received from my friends in the senate house. What treachery ! “ No,” replies Cato, “ I am not surprized. Wast thou not the tyrant of those friends as well as of the other citizens ? Was it not their duty to lend their hands to their oppressed country ? It was their duty to sacrifice not only a friend but a brother, as was done by Timoleon, and even their own children, as was done by Brutus.— But, tell me, in the midst of thy previous glory,

wast thou happy?—No, thou wast not. If thou hadst loved thy country, thy country would have loved thee; he, whom his country loves, wants no guards; his country watches round him. True security arises from doing good, and from interesting every one in your preservation. Thou wouldst reign and be feared. Well, thou didst reign, and thou wast feared: but mankind delivered themselves from the tyrant, and their fears of him, by the same stroke. So may all those perish, who wish to be feared by men! They have every thing to fear; all the world is interested in anticipating their acts of tyranny, and delivering themselves from the tyrant.”

Such were the exertions of Fenelon in educating the duke of Burgundy. We have seen what the duke St. Simon, whose evidence cannot be refused on this subject, says of their success. Madame de Maintenon, in one of her letters, gives the same testimony: “we saw all those defects, which alarmed us too much in the youth of the

duke of Burgundy, gradually disappear. Every year produced, in him, a visible increase of virtue. Rallied at first by every one, he obtained, in the end, the admiration of the freest livers. So much had his piety changed him, that, from being the most passionate of men, he became mild, gentle, and complying ; persons would have thought that mildness was his natural disposition, and that he was innately good."—All the writers of the time, who mention the duke of Burgundy, express themselves of him in the same terms.

Fenelon now began to enjoy the fruits of his labours ; his success in the education of the duke of Burgundy had excited general admiration, and his conciliating manners had obtained him general love. Lewis the fourteenth presented him to the Abbey of St. Valery, one of the richest in France ; and afterwards named him Archbishop of Cambray. He was consecrated in the chapel of St. Cyr, in the presence of madame de Maintenon and his three royal pupils.

We enter into the feelings of the preceptor and his pupils on this occasion. Unfortunately, it was almost the last day of the preceptor's happiness ; to use an expression of the chancellor d'Aguesseau, " events soon afterwards took place that revealed the secret which caused all his calamities,—his too great taste for the pious excesses of the mystics."—This memorable circumstance in the archbishop's life must now be presented to the reader.



## CHAP. IX.

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QUIETISM.

A. D. 1696. ÆT. 45.

IN every age of christianity, different denominations of christians, both orthodox and heterodox, have aimed at a sublime spirituality above visible objects and natural feelings, and attempted, by assiduous prayer and abstraction from terrene subjects, to raise themselves to an intellectual contemplation of the deity, and communion with him. Among them, the Quietists, to whose doctrines the subject of these pages now leads, were eminently distinguished in the ecclesiastical history of the middle ages,

and of modern times. The patriarch of modern quietists is Michael de Molinos, a spanish priest, who resided at Rome, towards the end of the 16th century. His pious reveries procured him a considerable number of disciples of both sexes : they were condemned by the pope, and his disciples were persecuted ; but they preserved an obscure existence, and, with a slight modification, or rather, under the cover of more guarded language, were revived in the age of Lewis the 14th, and, during several years, distracted the gallican church. In a religious, and even a philosophical point of view, the controversy, to which they gave rise, is a curious subject of enquiry, and it certainly forms the most interesting part of the biography of Fenelon.

Quietism is an abuse of the science of sacred contemplation, or as it is termed in the schools, of Mystical Theology \*, and an unwarranted extension of its language. Every

\* See Appendix, Note II.

age of the christian church furnishes contemplative writers of eminence. To a perfect understanding of the doctrines of the quietists, some acquaintance with the works of those writers is necessary : but, even with that aid, it is not very easy to give an account of them, which will be found at once accurate and intelligible. This difficulty is admitted by Bossuet : he accounts for it by observing that the errors of the quietists arose rather from an exaggeration of what in itself was good, than from their adoption of principles intrinsically erroneous : this will clearly appear from a slight view of their principal errors.

I. To love God for his own perfections, without any view to future reward or punishment, is the highest effort of the soul : an habitual state of it is beyond the lot of man ; and, as it would exclude hope, the foundation of all christian virtue, and fear, the beginning of all christian wisdom, it cannot be considered the duty of a christian. The quietists however professed that

they had attained this habitual state of divine love; they scarcely acknowledged any other virtue; and this supposed freedom from hope and fear, the great agitators of the human mind, was one of the principal reasons of their receiving the appellation of Quietists.

II. The contemplation of the deity raises, in the soul, conceptions and feelings which she can neither express by language, nor even embody by thought. When these are at their highest elevation, a devotional silence ensues, the most profound act of homage which the creator can receive from the creature. But a long continuation of this sublime devotion is above the natural powers of man, and, as it would exclude prayer, an attempt to attain it, must seem a disobedience to the precepts of him, who orders us always to pray, and framed for us a form of prayer. Yet, to this sublime and perpetual silence of the human mind, under the view of the deity, as to a common duty, the quietist aspired. All expi-

cit acts of devotion, even of the purest or simplest faith, respecting the trinity, the incarnation, or the particular attributes of the deity, and still more, those which arose from the articles on the creed or the petitions in the Our Father, were below his sublime devotion. His object was to ascend to God alone, and to rest in silent adoration of his divine essence, without hope and without fear.—This gave the quietists a further title to their appellation.

III. A constant spirit of conformity to the divine will, is the duty of every christian, and enters into every virtue; but, to discover the divine will, and, when it is discovered, to act in conformity to it, requires exertion on our parts, and a correspondence of action with the graces with which we are favoured.—Inert and inactive, the quietist presented himself to the deity. A formal petition for good, a formal deprecation of evil was, in his view, a degradation from the general submission which he owed to the divine will, and fell very short of that aban-

donment of himself to it, which the soul owed to her creator.

IV. That resignation of the soul, which relies on God's infinite mercy for eternal happiness in the next life, and for as much of the good of this life as is consistent with her sanctification, was beneath the virtue of a quietist. His resignation was to arise to a sublime indifference, both for temporal and eternal things; he was to look on both, without desire or alarm. Indulging himself in the impossible supposition, that such a sacrifice could be acceptable to God, he offered himself to reprobation in this life, and to eternal punishment in the next. This indifference to salvation, from a supposed conformity to the will of God, was the highest effort of a quietist's virtue, and completed his title to his appellation.

V. So strange a sacrifice was to be followed by as strange a reward. Far above an humble hope of eternal bliss, and an humble confidence of present favor, the ordinary happiness of the just in this life, the

quietist professed to aspire. — His soul was, even in this life, to assume a new existence, to be transformed into the divine essence, and to be so far individualised with the deity as to lose the consciousness of her existence separate from him.

VI. Whether we express our admiration or love of God, approach him in prayer, or speak his praise, our language must partake of the imperfections of our nature, and must therefore fall infinitely beneath its subject. Still, we should exert ourselves to use, in all our addresses to the deity, and in every mention of him, the noblest and purest terms in our power ; and not only respect for the awful being whom we address, but good sense and taste, point out to us the duty of avoiding, with the greatest care, every expression, in his regard, which, in itself is low, or has a tendency to raise a vulgar, a grotesque, or an irregular idea. Expressions of the very lowest kind, and tending to raise the most vulgar, grotesque, and irregular ideas, are to be found, too often, in the

writings of the quietists, and their expressions of divine love are sometimes such, as would better become the strains of an amatory sonneteer.

VII. The looseness of the doctrinal language of quietism was, perhaps, still more blameable. It was difficult to fix on it any meaning; and, when something of its meaning was discovered, it was necessary to understand it with so much limitation, and in a sense so peculiar to the writings of the quietists, that the obvious import of their phrases had generally little, and sometimes no resemblance with the notions they were intended to convey.

Such was the general nature of the charges brought against the quietists. To all of them the quietists pleaded guilty, so far as to allow the facts, on which they were built; but the consequences drawn from them the quietists confidently denied. They observed, that ascetic devotion, like every other science, had its appropriate nomenclature, upon which its professors were



agreed, and by which, therefore, their doctrines were to be tried and explained. Thus explained, they contended that their doctrines would be found to express the noblest and purest sentiments of divine love. They observed, that the language of the ancient was the same as the language of the modern mystics; and they suggested that there could be no just reason for withholding from the latter the indulgence which was shewn the former.

These assertions were not wholly destitute of foundation. It is admitted that the quietists themselves always protested against the pernicious consequences imputed to their doctrines. From that circumstance, from the general spirit of piety, which is to be found in many parts of their writings, from the acknowledged purity of their morals, and their regular observance of their religious duties, it has been contended, with some appearance of reason, that their religious system, as it was explained by themselves, was much less re-

prehensible than, standing singly, it appeared in their own writings ; and from these circumstances it was inferred by many, that their errors lay less in their tenets, than in the language in which their tenets were expressed.

In this mode of viewing the charge against the quietists, much of it was answered ; but much of it remained to be answered, for which they had no defence.

I. What is only true with an explanation, is untrue without it. The explanation, which the quietists offered, when put on their defence, was either not to be found, or was only faintly discoverable in their writings. Thus, with respect to the generality of readers, their doctrine stood unexplained, and was therefore, on the face of it, chargeable with the errors with which it was reproached.

II. With all the limitations, by which their writings could be qualified, they could, at most, be useful to very few—to that small number of persons only, whose

exalted piety and contemplative habits, enabled them to comprehend and relish such sublime speculations. To persons in the lower ranks of a spiritual life they would be both unintelligible and prejudicial. Yet, in all their writings, the quietists affected to inculcate, that their doctrine was the only solid foundation of a spiritual life, and that to learn and practise it was the universal duty of christians.

III. The unavoidable tendency of their writings was to draw the faithful from vocal prayer and meditation, the real support of a spiritual life, by exciting them to aim at a state of passive and quiescent devotion, in which, without any other effort on their part, than a recollection of their being under the eye of the divinity, and an intellectual belief of his presence, they were to expect the pious sentiments, with which he should visit them. Now, when it is considered how very few are capable of preserving a devotional habit of mind, even for a short time, without actual prayer and

meditation, and even without the assistance of a book, it may easily be perceived, that the state of passiveness and quiescence recommended by the quietists, immediately tended to a general subversion of all prayer and meditation.

IV. But the most pernicious part of their writings was the language in which they attempted to express their resignation to the divine will. In the ordinary acceptance of them, their expressions amounted to an absolute indifference to future rewards and punishments, and even to vice and virtue. That this was not their meaning may be conceded; but it is certain, that, in its common acceptance, the general language of their writings had that import.

## CHAP. X.

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MADAME DE GUYON.

THE revival of quietism in the reign of Lewis the fourteenth, was owing to madame de Guyon, and her finding too warm and powerful a friend in Fenelon.

She was descended from respectable parents, and inherited from them an ample fortune. Beauty, wit, elegance, whatever is most captivating in the female form or the female mind, she is allowed to have possessed in an eminent degree; and, after a very severe enquiry, her adversaries were forced to confess, that, in every part of her

life, her morals were irreproachable; she married at an early age; was left, while she was still young, a widow with children, and then, resolving to give herself wholly to devotion, she delivered up her children to their father's family. This exposed her to censure; but it was admitted that, in the settlement of the pecuniary concerns of her children, she conducted herself with generosity. Soon after she became a widow, she placed herself under the spiritual direction of father La Combe, a barnabite friar, who had been a disciple of Molinos. Under the impression of his instructions, she framed a system of spirituality, of which the doctrines of Molinos formed the ground work, and pretended a divine mission to propagate it among the faithful. With that view, she composed two works: her *Short Method of Prayer*, she put into the hands of beginners; her *Torrents*, she presented to the perfect. She travelled over many parts of France, every where made friends and proselytes, and finally arrived

in Paris. She was soon admitted to the private parties at the Hotel de Beauvilliers: there, in Fenelon, she found a willing hearer; and, when she descanted before him, on the love, the pure, disinterested love of God, she touched a nerve of exquisite sensibility, which vibrated to his heart.

That she had wit and eloquence is allowed by all her contemporaries; but her writings unquestionably abound with spiritual nonsense. She teaches in them that the soul, which completely abandons herself to the divine will, reserves for herself nothing; not even in death, or life, or perfection, or salvation, or heaven, or hell: that man is so worthless, that it scarcely deserves his own enquiry, whether he is to be eternally saved or eternally lost; that God sometimes takes from a soul every gift of grace and virtue; that the duty of a christian soul in this state, is to permit herself to be buried and crushed, to suffer the stench of her death, to leave her-

self to rot, and to try no means of avoiding her corruption; that, at length, she becomes insensible of her own stench, and accustoms herself to it, so as to remain at ease in it, without hope of arising out of it: then her inanition commences, and she begins to live to God alone. This should seem a picture of a soul abandoned to disorder, forsaken by God, and hardened in vice; but is presented by madame de Guyon as a picture of the most perfect virtue. In some part of her writings, she assumes a prophetic character; she pretends to see clearly the state of souls, to have a miraculous power both over souls and bodies; she calls herself the corner stone of the cross, rejected by human architects; she declares that she had attained so lofty a state of perfection, that she should no longer pray to the saints, or even to the mother of God, as it did not become the spouse of Christ to request the prayers of others. On some occasions, her language is so offensive to decency, that her expres-



sions will not bear repeating. In exposing this objectionable part of her writings, Bossuet beautifully apostrophizes the seraphs, and entreats them to bring burning coals from the altar of heaven, to purify his lips, lest they should have been defiled by the impurities which he had been obliged to mention.

From the hotel de Beauvilliers, where it was first introduced, quietism rapidly extended over Paris and the provinces: and attracted the notice of the french clergy. They pronounced it a dangerous innovation, chimerical in theory, subversive in practice, of the true spirit of religion, and leading indirectly to a frightful laxity of morals. At first it was relished by madame de Maintenon, but her good sense quickly led her to suspect it; she advised upon it with many persons of distinguished eminence in the church; they universally declared against it, and, from that time, she professed herself the enemy both of quietism, and madame de Guyon. Fenelon would not

admit the quietism of madame de Guyon, in the odious sense which was given to that word, and generally espoused her cause.

Bossuet, the bishop of Meaux, was at that time the oracle of the french clergy; and to him madame de Guyon, when her doctrine became a subject of dispute, addressed herself. He declared immediately against the spirituality of madame de Guyon; but in all his personal intercourse with her, he appears to have conducted himself with condescension and delicacy. So much was she satisfied with him, that she communicated to him all her works, both manuscript and in print. She even put into his hands, a manuscript account of her life; it is written with vivacity, and, in some parts of it, pleases by its piety; but it abounds with vanity and enthusiasm. The late Mr. John Westley translated it into English: in his preface to it, he says, "Such another life as that of madame de Guyon, I doubt whether the world ever saw.—It contains an abundance of excel-

lent things, uncommonly excellent : several things, which are utterly false and unscriptural ; nay, such as are dangerously false.—As to madame de Guyon herself, I believe, she was not only a good woman, but good in an eminent degree ; deeply devoted to God, and often favoured with uncommon communications of his spirit.”

It is very remarkable that madame de Guyon never showed her manuscript to Fenelon :—Was she more apprehensive of Fenelon’s good sense and discernment than of Bossuet’s ?—After having examined with great attention, the writings which madame de Guyon communicated to him, Bossuet had a personal conference with her ; he explained to her what he thought reprehensible in her works, and gave her advice for her conduct. She acquiesced in every thing he suggested ; he then said mass, and what, in her circumstances, was very remarkable, administered to her the blessed sacrament with his own hands.

Of these circumstances, Bossuet informed

Fenelon, and sent him large extracts which he had made from the writings of madame de Guyon, with remarks on them, and endeavoured to draw from Fenelon a direct condemnation of her doctrine. Fenelon professed the highest deference for his authority; he admitted that several passages in the works of madame de Guyon would not bear the rigid examination of scholastic accuracy; but he contended that they were entitled to a more benign interpretation, and, on that ground, deprecated for them the prelate's severity.

For some time, madame de Guyon lived in the retirement and quiet which Bossuet recommended to her: by degrees she grew tired of her obscurity: and, hearing that reports injurious to her character were in circulation, she applied to madame de Maintenon, to prevail on Lewis the fourteenth to appoint commissioners to enquire into her doctrines and morals. Madame de Maintenon observed, that madame de Guyon's morals had never been seriously

accused ; but, as her doctrines had occasioned a considerable degree of ferment in the mind of the public, she thought it a proper subject of enquiry. On madame de Maintenon's suggestion, Lewis the fourteenth appointed the bishop of Meaux, the bishop of Chartres, and M. Tronson, commissioners for this enquiry. They assembled at Issy, a retired country house, belonging to the congregation of St. Sulpice, of which, it has been mentioned, that M. Tronson was superior.

The conferences were carried on, without much interruption, during six months : the subject was discussed, the authorities examined, and the inferences weighed with great deliberation. Bossuet always admitted that, before these disputes, he was little conversant with mystical theology, and had read little of the mystical writings of St. Francis of Sales, St. John of the cross, and other spiritualists of eminence. At his request, Fenelon made extracts from those works for him, and accompanied them with

observations, evidently calculated to make Bossuet think favourably of them and of madame de Guyon.

After a full and patient examination of the writings of madame de Guyon, and of the general doctrine of quietism, the conferences at Issy closed. The commissioners drew up thirty articles; Fenelon was consulted upon them, made some alterations in them, and added to them, four, which were entirely new. In that state they were signed by the three commissioners, and by Fenelon. They contain no mention of madame de Guyon, or her doctrines; but profess to express the doctrines of the church on the principal points of dispute on the subject of quietism. They declare that every christian is bound to practise the theological virtues, and make acts of them; to desire and pray explicitly for his eternal salvation, as a blessing which God wishes to grant him, and enjoins him to desire; to pray for the remission of his sins, for the blessing of perseverance, for increase of

virtue, and for strength to resist temptation ; that it is unlawful to be indifferent to salvation, or to any thing with which salvation is connected : that these acts of devotion do not derogate from a high state of perfection ; that faith and the ordinary measure of grace will raise a christian to perfection ; that we should always endeavour to obtain it, without waiting for a particular inspiration ; that acts of faith and hope form a part of the sublimest prayer, as they necessarily enter into charity, which is its foundation : that perpetual prayer does not consist in a perpetual and uninterrupted address to the Deity, but in an occasional prayer, and an habitual disposition and readiness to perform his holy will ; that passive prayer, as it is described and admitted by St. Francis of Sales, and some other spiritualists, approved of by the roman-catholic church, should not be rejected ; that, without it, persons may be great saints ; that it is a dangerous error to exclude from it, an attention to the particular at-



tributes of the Deity, or to the mysteries of faith, to the passion, the death, or the resurrection of Christ; that the gift of high prayer is very uncommon, and should always be submitted to the examination of spiritual superiors.

Whatever may have been the errors of madame de Guyon, her docility is entitled to praise. Without any reserve or equivocation, she signed a writing, expressing her acquiescence in the doctrine contained in the articles of Issy. The bishop of Chartres, and afterwards cardinal de Noailles published a condemnation of her writings; to each of them she readily subscribed.

It was soon after the breaking up of the conferences at Issy, that Fenelon was nominated to the archbishoprick of Cambray; every thing respecting quietism then seemed to be set at rest. At his own warm request, Bossuet officiated at the consecration of Fenelon; and it appears that he was anxious to shew to Fenelon this mark of regard.



Quietism, however, continued to gain ground. To stop its progress, Bossuet composed his "Instruction sur les états de l'oraison." It was formally approved of by the cardinal de Noailles, and the bishop of Chartres; and Bossuet earnestly wished that it should have the approbation of the new archbishop. This Fenelon declined on two grounds; he thought it contained an absolute and unqualified denial of the possibility of a pure disinterested love of God, and that its censures of madame de Guyon, were too general and too severe.

It seems to be admitted that there was some ground for the first of these objections; on the second little can now be said. It appears, however, that Fenelon's motives for withholding his approbation of the work appeared satisfactory to the cardinal de Noailles, the bishop of Chartres, and madame de Maintenon; but they required of him immediately to publish some work, in which he should express, in precise and

unequivocal terms, his adherence to the doctrine contained in the articles of Issy, and his disapprobation of the doctrine of the quietists.

## CHAP. XI.

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*THE CONTEST OF FENELON AND BOSSUET, ON  
THE SUBJECT OF QUIETISM, PARTICULARLY  
ON FENELON'S BOOK "EXPLICATION DES  
MAXIMES DES SAINTS SUR LA VIE INTERI-  
EURE."*

IN performance of his engagements with the cardinal and the bishop of Chartres, and with madame de Maintenon, Fenelon, soon after his consecration, published his celebrated "*Explication des Maximes des Saints sur la Vie interieure,*" the immediate cause of all his woe. It is certain, that, before it was printed, it was examined, with the most severe and scrupulous attention, by the cardinal de Noailles and M. Tronson, and by M. Pirot, a theologian of great emi-

nence in his day, attached to Bossuet, and consulted by him, on his work, "*Sur les états d'oraison.*" All of them pronounced the *Maximes des Saints* a golden work; and cardinal de Noailles said, he had no charge to bring against the author, but his too great docility. It is, however, equally certain, that immediately on its appearance, it was distinctly and loudly condemned by the public voice. In a private letter of Bossuet, he justly remarked, that, at a time when a false mysticism did so much harm, nothing should be written on the subject, but to condemn it, and that the true mystic should be left in peace to God.

Till this stage of the business, Lewis the fourteenth was kept in ignorance of the disputes in question: it was then thought necessary that he should be made acquainted with them. Bossuet fell at his feet, informed him of the fact, and asked "his pardon for not having informed him sooner of the fanaticism of his mitred brother." A less theatrical revelation of the

secret, would, perhaps, have been more consonant to the dictates of christian prudence and charity.

To Fenelon, Lewis the fourteenth was never partial.—This circumstance is mentioned both by the duke de St. Simon and the chancellor d'Aguisseau ; they observe that Fenelon had a loftiness of genius, of which that monarch felt an awe; and something of an extraordinary elevation of character, which did not accord with the severe simplicity of the royal mind ; so that, though Lewis the fourteenth was not insensible to the merits of Fenelon, and had raised him to one of the highest ranks in the gallican church, he had no personal attachment to him. Hence, when Bossuet disclosed to Lewis the fourteenth, the fanaticism, as he termed it, of Fenelon, there was nothing in the mind of Lewis the fourteenth, which pleaded in the archbishop's favour, and the monarch's aversion from all novelties, particularly in matters of religion, argued strongly against him. From madame de

Maintenon, who had once been so partial to him, it was natural that Fenelon should expect more indulgence ; but, at the time of Bossuet's disclosure to Lewis the fourteenth, she was quite alienated from Fenelon. His piety had first recommended him to her ; when that piety appeared to her to be tinctured with quietism, it became odious to her. Good sense and severity marked her character, as much as they did the character of Lewis the fourteenth : it was therefore natural for her to view Fenelon's partiality for madame de Guyon, (for such his refusal to censure her writings must have appeared to madame de Maintenon) with disgust. Besides,—a sense of her own preservation would naturally irritate madame de Maintenon greatly against Fenelon, and induce her rather to seek, than avoid occasions of expressing herself to his disadvantage. Lewis the fourteenth's anger with him was very great, and it appears by a letter, of which M. de Bausset gives his readers an extract, that madame de

Maintenon was apprehensive of his being seriously displeased with her for keeping Fenelon's conduct so long concealed from him. Some writers have intimated that madame de Maintenon had a very particular cause of complaint against Fenelon : by their account Lewis the fourteenth consulted Fenelon on the propriety of making public his marriage with madame de Maintenon, and Fenelon advised the monarch against it.—But this story rests on very slight authority ; and M. de Bausset mentions, that among Fenelon's papers he did not discover the slightest circumstance in its support, and that it was disbelieved in Fenelon's family. It is, however, certain that, from the time of which we are now speaking, madame de Maintenon's conduct to Fenelon, was unfriendly. To restore him to the favour of her sexagenary lover, might not be in her power ; but it is difficult to suppose that it was not in her power, to save Fenelon from many mortifications, and, in a great measure, to break his fall ;

and if she had this power, she owed to her former friendship for him, to his character, at once so amiable and so respectable, and even to the claims which genius in distress ever has on the powerful and the great, to exert it all for him. But her friendly arm was never stretched out to Fenelon. It was in her own establishment at St. Cyr, that Lewis the fourteenth's displeasure at Fenelon was first publicly displayed. The monarch repaired to St. Cyr, summoned the whole community before him, dismissed three of the religious, who were supposed to be attached to the opinions of madame de Guyon, declared they should never be readmitted, and expressed the strongest indignation against that lady and all her adherents.

Many attempts were made to bring the dispute to an amicable termination. Explanations were suggested, conferences were proposed; but every thing proved ineffectual. Nothing short of a formal retraction would satisfy Bossuet. He declared that the



maxims of the saint contained some positions which were errors of faith; others, that led directly to quietism and the most fatal consequences; some things that were abominable; and several falsifications of passages in the writings of St. Francis of Sales. Yet he spoke of Fenelon, as an author dear to his heart, who was so used to listen to him, and to whom he was so used to listen. “God,” says Bossuet, “in whose presence I write, knows, with what sighs I have raised to him my sorrowful voice, in complaint that a friend of so many years thought me unworthy of treating with him,—me, who never raised my voice more than half a tone against him. I impute it to my sins, that such a friend has failed me, the friend of my life, whom I carry in my heart.” Yet; when the cardinal de Noailles and the bishop of Chartres seemed to relax in favour of Fenelon, “take your own measures,” Bossuet sternly said to them, “I will raise my voice to the heavens against those errors, so well known to

you ; I will complain to Rome, to the whole earth ; it shall not be said that the cause of God is weakly betrayed ; though I should stand single in it, I will advocate it." After the affair of quietism was over, Lewis the fourteenth asked Bossuet, how he would have acted, if he had not met with the royal support : " I should have raised my voice still higher than I did," answered Bossuet.

The storm continually increasing, Fenelon determined to carry the cause to Rome. For this he requested the monarch's permission, and it was immediately granted. Lewis wrote, with his own hand, to the Pope, a letter, penned by Bossuet. It denounced to the pope the Maxims of the Saints, as " a very bad and very dangerous work ; condemned by bishops, by many doctors, and a multitude of learned religious men ; that the explanations offered by the archbishop could not be supported." The monarch concluded by " assuring the pope, that he would use all his authority to cause the decision of the holy see to be

carried into execution." This certainly was not the tone of moderation and impartiality, with which the cause ought to have been presented to the holy see. A few days after the letter was written, the cardinal de Noailles, Bossuet, and the bishop of Chartres, signed a formal condemnation of the *Maxims* of the Saints, and delivered it into the hands of M. Delphini, the pope's nuncio. It was penned by Bossuet, and is expressed with great moderation ; but it was greatly softened by the cardinal de Noailles and the bishop of Chartres, after it came from the hands of Bossuet.—It should, however, be remarked, that it mentions as an expression of Fenelon's "the involuntary emotion of Jesus Christ on the Cross." Now, both before and after the bishops had signed this instrument, Fenelon uniformly declared that the expression had been interpolated by the printer's mistake.—After such a declaration, the expression should not have been noticed ; or, if it were noticed, the

archbishop's declaration should have been noticed equally.

Fenelon applied to Lewis the fourteenth for his permission to go to Rome, under any restrictions his majesty should think proper. This, the monarch absolutely refused, but permitted him to send agents to Rome, to act for him. He ordered Fenelon to proceed immediately to his diocese, to remain there, and not to stop at Paris longer than his affairs made his stay absolutely necessary. Immediately on receiving this letter, Fenelon wrote to madame de Maintenon, and in his letter, expressed, in short and unaffected language, his concern at his having incurred the displeasure of her and the king, his obedience to his majesty, and his future submission to the sentence of the holy see. Madame de Maintenon was so much affected by Fenelon's letter as to be seriously ill. Lewis reproached her with it; "we are then," he said, "to see you die by inches, for this foolish

affair.” In passing through Paris, Fenelon stopped before the seminary of St. Sulpice, where he had spent his early, and probably, his happiest hours : but he forbore from entering the house, least his shewing a regard for it, might expose its inhabitants to his majesty’s displeasure. From Paris, he proceeded strait to Cambray.

The agent whom he employed at Rome was the abbé de Chantèrac, a relation, with whom he had long been united in the closest friendship, and with whom he had long lived in the habit of the most confidential communication. The abbé possessed every quality, which could recommend him, on this occasion, to Fenelon. His probity and piety were exemplary ; his mode of thinking and acting were mild ; he spoke and wrote the latin and italian languages with ease and elegance ; the subject of the controversy, and every thing, which had passed in respect to it, were familiar to him ; he was intimately acquainted with Fenelon’s notions and views, and had the most sincere

affection and veneration for him. "My dear friend," Fenelon said in the instructions which he gave him for his conduct at Rome, "consider God alone, in the unhappy business. I often say with Mardochæus, O Lord! every thing is known to thee; thou knowest that, what I have done, is not through pride, through contempt of others, or the secret desire of glory. When God shall manifest his pleasure, we too should be pleased; whatever may be the humiliation he sends us."

Bossuet's agents, were the abbé Bossuet, his nephew, and the abbé de Phillippeaux; both of them had learning and talents, both were attached to Bossuet: but both inclined to violent councils; the friends of Bossuet have laid to their charge the intemperate spirit, which too often, in the course of the controversy, was shewn by Bossuet.

Lewis the fourteenth removed Fenelon from his office of preceptor to the duke of Burgundy, the duke of Anjou, and the duke of Berri, but permitted him to retain the

title of their preceptor. His displeasure with Fenelon extended to his relations and friends: the frown of the court was shewn to them all; but, to the eternal honour of them all, it appears that, in spite of the monarch's frown, every friend of Fenelon continued attached to him. The duke de Beauvilliers proclaimed publicly his friendship for him: Lewis the fourteenth reproached the duke with it, and intimated to him, that it might be the cause of his own disgrace. "I will remember," the duke replied, "that Fenelon was appointed preceptor to the duke of Burgundy upon my recommendation; I shall never repent of it. Fenelon always has been, and is now more than ever, my friend. I know I am the work of your majesty's hand: you raised me, you may throw me down. If this should happen, I shall recognize, in what befalls me, the will of the almighty. I shall retire, with sincere regret at having displeased your majesty; not, however, without the hope of leading a more quiet

life than a court allows." On some occasion, a compromise was suggested, which, if it had been accepted, would have hushed the question, and of course removed the duke from danger; the duke would not even hear of it, and desired it might not be mentioned to Fenelon.

But, among the friends of Fenelon none was more constant than his royal pupil, the duke of Burgundy. The instant he heard of Fenelon's banishment, he ran to his grandfather, flung himself at his feet, implored, with tears, his clemency, and, as a proof of the purity of Fenelon's doctrine, appealed to what his own conduct would ever be. Lewis was affected with the noble conduct of his grandson; when he recovered himself, he told him that, what he solicited was not a matter of favour: that the purity of faith was at stake, "and of that," he said, "Bossuet is the best judge." The duke retired in silence: how he felt and how he conducted himself afterwards in respect to Fenelon, will be mentioned.



in a future page of this work : the preceptor and pupil were worthy of each other.

After the cardinal de Noailles, the bishop of Chartres, and Bossuet had published their condemnation of the *Maxims of the Saints*, the two former almost quit-  
ted the war, and left the field to Bossuet and Fenelon. “ Then,” to use the words of the chancellor, D’Aguesseau, “ were seen to enter the lists, two combatants, rather equal than alike. One of them of consummate skill, covered with the laurels which he had gained in his combats for the church, an indefatigable warrior ; his age and repeated victories might have dispensed him from further service, but his mind, still vigorous, and superior to the weight of his years, preserved, in his old age, a great portion of the fire of his early years. The other, in the full strength of youth, not yet much known by his writings, but enjoying the highest reputation for his eloquence and the loftiness of his genius : long exercised in the subject of discussion, a perfect

master of its language: nothing in it was above his comprehension, nothing in it which he could not explain, and every thing he explained appeared plausible. Before they became rivals, they had long been friends; both were estimable for the purity of their morals; both amiable for the softness of their manners; both an ornament of the church, of the court, and of human nature: one was respected as the sun setting in full majesty; the other, as the sun, who promised to fill the universe with his glory, if he could but disengage himself from a kind of eclipse in which he was unhappily involved."

It is admitted that the tenets objected by Bossuet to Fenelon may be reduced to two :

1st, That a person may attain an habitual state of divine love, in which he loves God, purely for his sake, and without the slightest regard to his own interests, even in respect to his eternal happiness. This was said to elevate charity beyond human

power, at the expence of the fear of God, and the hope of divine favour.

2dly, That, in such a state, it is lawful, and may even be considered as an heroic effort of conformity to the divine will, to consent to eternal reprobation, if God should require such a sacrifice; the party who makes such an act, conceiving at the moment that such a sacrifice is possible.

It was also objected to Fenelon, that he refused to subscribe to the condemnation of madame de Guyon, in whose writings these propositions were expressed in the boldest terms; who maintained the possibility of a permanent existence, of a state of divine love, depending only on faith, and a kind of intellectual view of the deity, from which prayer and every other devotional effort was absent, and even kept away; who confounded a holy resignation to the divine will, with indifference to salvation; whose works abounded with expressions on the love of God, offensive to good sense and delicacy; with ridiculous and

impossible suppositions, and monstrous and disgusting errors. These were the charges brought by Bossuet against Fenelon, with subsidiary charges of inconsistency, duplicity, falsification, subterfuge, and other similar accusations. Fenelon retorted on Bossuet, that, by denying the pure love of God, he elevated the hope and fear of God at the expence of charity, and that his censures of madame de Guyon were too general, and immoderately severe.

During this memorable controversy Bossuet and Fenelon repeatedly issued from the press in the way of attack and defence. It is admitted that each of them exerted his utmost talents for composition, in these publications: that no work of either is more highly finished: that each shews in his writings on this occasion, a conscious dignity of character; each cautiously abstains from vulgar abuse, but each exerts every power and artifice of composition to excite the resentment of his reader against his adversary. Had such works been written, on

any subject of a general and permanent interest, they would now be found, with the Introduction to Universal History, and with Telemachus, in every library and on many a toilet : but, from the perishable nature of the subject, after a momentary celebrity, they sunk into oblivion, and are now read by those only who anxiously labour to acquire the highest polish of the French language.

Sure of the active support of his sovereign, and confiding, as he certainly might very far, in the justice of his cause, Bossuet appears to have expected that the court of Rome would have proceeded almost immediately to the condemnation of the accused book. With this impression, Bossuet's instructions to his agents were, to avoid the slightest intimation, that the condemnation of it, " would be attended with the least difficulty ; that, in whatever manner the sentence of condemnation should be pronounced, it would meet with no resistance." They were to represent, that

“ Fenelon, in his own diocese, was considered an heretic; and that, as soon as Rome should speak, Cambray and all the Low Countries would rise against him.” But the court of Rome was too wise to proceed with such precipitancy. For some time, the pope took no other step in the business, than to consult with his confidential advisers on the best method of proceeding in it. He then appointed a commission, composed of the persons in Rome most distinguished for learning and piety; they were directed to extract, from the book, such propositions as appeared to them reprehensible. Several propositions, which appeared to them of that description, they extracted; and they referred them to the pope himself, stating, at length, their reasons for supposing them erroneous. By the pope’s orders, they were transmitted to the agents of Bossuet and Fenelon, for their observations; and, when those were returned, all the papers were again laid before the pope, and, both in public

and private consistories, repeatedly discussed in his presence. The pope permitted nothing of his sentiments to transpire, except that he thought the matter submitted to him was important and full of difficulty. Both Bossuet and his royal master were surprized and mortified at this delay. At the instigation of Bossuet, the monarch expressed his impatience of it to the nuncio, and the nuncio described it strongly to the pope. His holiness desired him to observe to the king, that, "as the three bishops had become accusers of Fenelon, and had given the greatest publicity to their charge against him, every rule of justice, and the practice of every judicial court required, that Fenelon should be fully heard in his defence."

For a time, the king seemed willing to leave the matter to its course; but Bossuet intimated to him, that it was essential to his glory and the good of the church, that the sentence of Rome should be accelerated. He composed, in the name of

Lewis, a memorial, stating succinctly the arguments used against Fenelon, and urging his speedy condemnation. Lewis with his own hand, delivered this memorial to the nuncio. Some time after, Lewis dismissed the Abbé de Beaumont, and the Abbé de Langeron; both of whom were the confidential friends, and the former of whom was the nephew of Fenelon, from their situation of sub-preceptors to the royal dukes: all Fenelon's other relations, and several of his friends, were forbidden the court. The abbé Bossuet and the abbé Phillippeaux heard this with a transport of joy, and earnestly recommended that the proscription might be extended to father le Chaise, father Valois, and some other religious persons about the court; "they wish all possible evil," writes the abbé Bossuet to his uncle, "to the king, to madame de Maintenon, to the archbishop of Paris, and to yourself."

Under all these indignities Fenelon preserved the pious serenity of his mind.



“ Yet but a little while,” he says in one of his letters, “ and the deceitful dream of this life will be over. We shall meet in the kingdom of truth, where there is no error, no division, no scandal ; we shall breathe the pure love of God ; he will communicate to us his everlasting peace. In the mean while, let us suffer, let us suffer ; let us be trodden under foot ; let us not refuse disgrace ; Jesus Christ was disgraced for us : may our disgrace tend to his glory.”

We have seen that Lewis the fourteenth had permitted Fenelon to retain the title of preceptor to the royal dukes ; even that slight indulgence was now withdrawn from him ; Lewis ordered the list of the officers about their persons to be presented to him, and, with his own hand, drew a line over the name of Fenelon.

The pens both of Fenelon and Bossuet were soon put into action : a pastoral instruction of cardinal de Noailles was the signal for war ; Fenelon, in answer to it, addressed four letters to the cardinal ; five

or six different works were sent to the press by Bossuet: all his controversial talents and eloquence are displayed in them. Fenelon replied to them: by the talents which he displayed in his replies, he fairly balanced his rival's character as a writer, and, by their apparent candour and simplicity, won over every heart to his cause. "How painful is it to me," he says to Bossuet, "to carry on, against you, this combat of words! and that, to defend myself against your terrible charges, it should be necessary for me to point out your misrepresentations of my doctrine? I am the writer so dear to you, whom you always carry in your heart! yet you endeavour to plunge me, as another Molinos, into the gulph of quietism. Every where you weep over my misfortunes, and, while you weep, you tear me into pieces. What can be thought of tears, to which recourse is only had, when crimination is to be aggravated! You weep on my account, and you suppress what is essential in my writ-

ings: you join together sentences in them which are wide asunder. Your own exaggerated consequences, formally contradicted in my text, you hold out as my principles! What is most pure in my text, becomes blasphemy in your representation of it! Believe me, we are too long a spectacle to the world; an object of derision to the ungodly; of compassion to the good. That other men should be men, is not surprising; but that the ministers of Jesus Christ, the angels of the church, should exhibit such scenes to the profane and the unbeliever, calls for tears of blood. How much more fortunate would have been our lot, if, instead of thus consuming our time in interminable disputes, we had been employed in our dioceses, in teaching the catechism, in instructing the villager to fear God, and bless his holy name."

Bossuet now saw, with surprise, that Fenelon met him with equal arms, and that, if the public opinion did not yet consider Fenelon to be wholly innocent, it

considered him to be cruelly persecuted, and Bossuet to be his persecutor. Besides, it had transpired, that in the consistories at Rome, many voices had declared in favour of Fenelon.

Another battery was now opened against the archbishop : an attempt was made to revive the stories, often propagated but fully disproved, of the too great familiarities of madame de Guyon with father La Combe. At this time father La Combe had been a prisoner, during ten years, in the chateau de Lourds, at the foot of the Pyrennees. To have him more under its command, the court caused him to be transferred to the chateau de St. Vincennes : there, he was prevailed upon to write to madame de Guyon a letter, exhorting her to acknowledge and repent of their intercourse. It was expected, that the ascertainment of this fact, would indirectly operate to the detriment of Fenelon, by exposing his connection with that lady to a similar suspicion. So much importance

was annexed to this circumstance that cardinal de Noailles himself, with the curé de St. Sulpice, took the letter to madame de Guyon, and pressed her, in the most solemn and moving terms, to confess the fault. She heard them with surprise, coolly asserted her innocence, and declared, that father La Combe must have been mad when he wrote such a letter. The accusation, however, was believed by the cardinal and by Bossuet. The latter forwarded it to his nephew at Rome : “ It is better than twenty theological demonstrations,” was the nephew’s answer on receiving it. “ These are the arguments we most need.” But the whole of this wretched manœuvre ended in nothing : it was soon discovered that father La Combe’s intellects were wholly deranged ; he was removed to Charenton, and died in the course of the following year, in a state of complete insanity. Still the stories of Fenelon’s supposed habits with madame de Guyon were kept alive : “ It is asserted here,” the abbé

de Chanterac writes to him, "that you followed madame de Guyon equally in her disorders, as in her errors. To impress this on the mind of the public, every new courier is said to bring new confessions of the woman, and fresh discoveries of her abominations. It is asserted that your adversaries are in possession of the originals of several of your letters to her, which, however, to save your reputation, are not to be produced till the last extremity. It was in this stage of the business, that Fenelon's friends were dismissed the court. When the abbé de Chanterac informed the pope of this circumstance, his holiness was greatly affected; he repeated to himself with great emotion: "*expulerunt nepotem, expulerunt consanguineos, expulerunt amicos,*" they have put out of doors his nephew, his relations, his friends!

In spite of the odious measures we have mentioned, in spite of the logic and eloquence of Bossuet, the public favour began to manifest itself more strongly for Fenelon,

and it hourly became more and more uncertain, which would ultimately prove victorious, Bossuet, aided by the favour of the sovereign, or Fenelon, who had nothing to oppose him, but the exquisite beauty of his genius, and the reputation of his virtue.

At this critical moment, Bossuet published his celebrated Relation of Quietism. In composing it, he availed himself of some secret and confidential writings which he had received from madame de Guyon, of private letters written to him by Fenelon, during their early intimacy, and of a letter, which, under the seal of friendship, Fenelon had written to madame de Maintenon, and which, in this trying hour, she unfeelingly communicated to Bossuet. The substance of these different pieces, Bossuet connected with so much art, interwove in them the mention of so many curious facts, so entertaining an account of madame de Guyon's visions and pretensions to inspiration, and so many interesting anecdotes of the conduct of Lewis the fourteenth, and madame



de Maintenon during the controversy ; he occasionally inserted in it, so much dignified and truly episcopal eloquence, he deplored so feelingly the errors of Fenelon, presented his own conduct, during their disputes, in so favourable a view, and put the whole together with such exquisite skill, expressed it with so much elegance, and set it off by such brilliancy of thought and expression, as excited universal admiration, and attracted universal favor to its author. In one part of it, he assumed a style of mystery, and announced, “ that the time was come, when it was the almighty’s will, that the secrets of the union should be revealed.” —a terrible revelation was then expected, it seemed to appal every heart : it seemed that the existence of virtue itself would become problematical, if it should be proved that Fenelon was not virtuous.

A letter of madame de Maintenon shews the eagerness with which the extraordinary performance of Bossuet was read ; “ they talk here of nothing else ; they lend it, they



snatch it from one another, they devour it:" she herself circulated copies of it every where. Nothing could exceed the consternation, which this raised among the friends of Fenelon, at Rome, and at Paris:—His first intention was not to answer it; but the abbé de Chantèrac informed him, that the impression, which it made against him at Rome was so strong, that a full refutation of it was absolutely necessary. He therefore determined to reply. Bossuet's relation appeared in the middle of June, Fenelon's reply was published on the third of August.

A nobler effusion of the indignation of insulted virtue and genius, eloquence has never produced. In the first lines of it Fenelon placed himself above his antagonist, and to the last preserves his elevation. "Notwithstanding my innocence," says Fenelon, "I was always apprehensive of a dispute of facts; I knew that such a dispute between bishops must occasion considerable scandal. If, as the bishop of Me-

aux has a hundred times asserted, my book be full of the most extravagant contradictions, and the most monstrous errors, why does he have recourse to discussions, which must be attended with the most terrible of all scandals? why does he reveal to libertines what he terms a woeful mystery, a prodigy of seduction? why, when the propriety of censuring my book is the sole question, does he travel out of it's text? but the bishop of Meaux begins to find it difficult to establish his accusations of my doctrine; the history of madame de Guyon then comes to his aid, and he lays hold of it as an amusing tale, likely to make all his mistakes of my doctrine disappear and be forgotten. Thus, when he can no longer argue the point of doctrine, he attacks me personally; he publishes on the house-top what before he only ventured to whisper: he has recourse to all that is most odious in human society. The secret of private letters written in intimate and religious confidence, (the most sacred after that of con-

fession), has nothing inviolable in him. He produces my letters to Rome ; he prints letters which I writ to him in the strictest confidence.—But all will be useless to him; he will find that nothing that is dishonourable ever proves serviceable.” He then takes up Bossuet’s insinuations respecting madame de Guyon ; he produces the very honourable testimonies of the bishop of Geneva, both in respect to her piety and her morals, under which she was first introduced to him. He observes to Bossuet, that, after the long examination he had made of her doctrine, he permitted her to frequent the sacraments habitually, and even allowed her to state, in the declaration which he made her sign, that it had always been her wish to write in the most orthodox sense, and that she never thought it was possible to give her words any other meaning. “Now,” continues Fenelon, “if the bishop of Meaux, who had a full knowledge of madame de Guyon’s most secret manuscripts, of those very manuscripts, from which, in

his Relation, he has given such remarkable extracts, with a view of representing her as infected with the most extravagant and dangerous principles ; if, in the full possession of these documents, he still thought her intentions good, might not I, to whom all these manuscripts, all these visions, all these pretended miracles were altogether unknown, be allowed to entertain that private opinion in favour of madame de Guyon's intentions, which Bossuet, in a public instrument, admitted to be presumable ?" This positive assertion by Fenelon, of his absolute ignorance of madame de Guyon's manuscripts, is of the utmost importance to his character, as it necessarily goes very far in excusing his refusal of subscribing to Bossuet's condemnation of her. It is to be observed, that, throughout the controversy, the truth of this assertion was never questioned.

Bossuet, in his relation of quietism, exclaimed, " May I venture to say it ? Yes, I can say it confidently, and in the face of

the sun. Could I, the most simple of mortals, the most incapable of artifice and dissimulation ; could I, single and unaided, from the solitude of my cabinet, buried in papers and books, by imperceptible springs, put all the court, all Paris, all the kingdom, all Europe, Rome itself into action, to ruin merely by the strength of my own personal credit the archbishop of Cambray?" In answer to this animated figure, Fenelon cites a passage on which Bossuet deplores the general seduction in Fenelon's favour. " You lament then," says Fenelon, " the sudden and universal seduction in my favour ! Permit me to avail myself against you of your own vivid expressions. Could I, in exile at Cambray, from the solitude of my cabinet, by imperceptible springs, attach to me so many disinterested and impartial persons, who, before they read my replies to you, were so prejudiced against me ? Could I in exile, I contradicted, I overwhelmed on all sides, could I do that for my writings, which the bishop of

Meaux, in credit, in power, with so many means of making himself dreaded, could not do against them? The bishop of Meaux complains that cabals and factions are in motion; that passion and interest divide the world. Be it so! But, what interest can any person have to stir in my cause? I stand single and am wholly destitute of human help; no one, that has a view to his interest, dares look upon me. Great bodies, great powers, says the bishop, are in motion; but where are the great bodies, the great powers that stand up for me! These are the excuses the bishop of Meaux gives, for the world's appearing to be divided on his charges against my doctrine, which at first, he represented to be so completely abominable, as to admit of no fair explanation. This division, in the public opinion, on a matter which he represented to be so clear, makes him feel it advisable to shift the subject of dispute from a question of doctrine to a personal charge."

Fenelon thus concludes:—"If the bi-

shop of Meaux has any further writing, any further evidence to produce against me, I conjure him not to do it by halves. Such a proceeding is worse than any publication ; I conjure him to forward it instantly to Rome. I fear nothing, thank God, that will be communicated and examined judicially ; I fear nothing but vague report and unexamined allegation.”

“ I cannot here forbear from calling to witness the adorable being whose eye pierces the thickest darkness, and before whom we must all appear ; he reads my heart ; he knows that I adhere to no person, and to no book ; that I am attached to him alone, and to his church ; that incessantly, in his holy presence, I beseech him, with sighs and tears, to restore peace to his church, and shorten the days of scandal ; to bring back the shepherds to their flocks ; to reunite all in his holy mansion, and bestow on the bishop of Meaux as many blessings as the bishop of Meaux has thrown crosses on me.”



Never did virtue and genius obtain a more complete triumph. Fenelon's reply, by a kind of enchantment, restored to him every heart. Crushed by the strong arm of power, abandoned by the multitude, there was nothing to which he could look but his own powers. Obligated to fight for his honour, it was necessary for him, if he did not consent to sink under the accusation, to assume a port still more imposing than that of his mighty antagonist. Much had been expected from him, but none had supposed that he would raise himself to so prodigious a height as would not only repel the attack of his antagonist, but actually reduce him to the defensive.

Bossuet published remarks on Fenelon's reply; Fenelon published an answer to these, which, on the question of facts, fixed the public in his favour.

“What an indecency,” says Fenelon, “it is to behold in the house of God, in his very sanctuary, his principal ministers



unceasingly venting on each other, vague declamations which prove nothing. Your age, and my infirmities, must make us soon appear before him, whom credit cannot influence, eloquence cannot seduce. You profess to be afraid of my power, to fear my subtilty. To what are you reduced ! You are under a necessity of proving seriously that I have more power than you ! what cannot your subtilty prove if it can prove a fact so contrary to what is known to the whole world ?”

In one of his works, Bossuet has compared Fenelon and madame de Guyon to the heretic Montanus and his prophetess Priscilla. Fenelon exclaimed against the odiousness of the comparison : Bossuet, in his justification, alledged that a criminal intercourse between Montanus and Priscilla had never been suspected ; that it was a mere commerce of mental illusion, like that of Fenelon and madame de Guyon.—“ But,” says Fenelon,” does my illusion, such even as you represent it, resemble

that of Montanus ? That fanatic had detached from their husbands two wives, who followed him every where ; he delivered them up to a false spirit of prophecy ; he was himself possessed by it, and all three in a transport of diabolical fury strangled themselves. Such was the man, the horror of all succeeding times, to whom you compare me ; me, the dear friend of your life, whom you carry in your heart. You say, I have no right to complain of the comparison. No, my lord bishop, I do not complain : I grieve for you—for you, who can coolly say you accuse me of nothing, when you compare me to Montanus ! Who now believes what you say ? You have done for me more than I could have done for myself. But what a wretched comfort is this, when I see the scandal it brings into the house of God ; what a triumph your disgrace is to heretics and libertines.”

“ The scandal was not so great,” says the chancellor D’Aguesseau, “ while these

great antagonists confined their quarrel to points of doctrine: but the scene was truly afflicting to all good men when they attacked one another on facts, and differed so much in their accounts, that, as it was impossible that both should speak the truth, persons saw with concern, but saw with certainty, that one of the two prelates must be guilty of untruth. Without saying on which side the truth lay, it is certain that the archbishop of Cambray contrived to obtain, in the opinion of the public, the advantage of probability: - *sut se donner, dans l'esprit du public; l'avantage de la vraisemblance.*" From this time the question of facts was abandoned.

The apologies of Fenelon did not produce a less effect at Rome, than they did at Paris; and his friends, to use their own words, experienced the same joy, as if, having seen him for a long time struggling with the waves, and finally sinking under them, they beheld him regain the shore in safety. The happiness of the abbé de

Chanterac was perfect: "When I saw," he writes to Fenelon, "your innocence on the point of being overwhelmed in consequence of your repugnance to answer the unjust charges brought against you, and that your silence put the doctrine of the church in danger of being confounded with the most gross errors, I own to you that my soul was often sorrowful, and that as I sate under the juniper branches I could not always keep my sorrows within bound. 'Cum sederet subter juniperum, petevit animæ suæ ut moreretur.' (III. Lib. Reg. cap. 19.) But now, when the truth is known, and you have done all that depended on you to clear it up and defend it, whatever may happen will so clearly appear to be the will of God, in our regard, that I shall not venture to complain of it to him, or even to be afflicted at it. I shall quietly submit myself to his holy will."

The pope and cardinals received Fenelon's apology from the abbé in the most

affectionate manner : all of them expressed themselves satisfied with it ; the abbé mentions that, when they found how completely Fenelon vindicated his innocence, they seemed to him to feel themselves eased of a weight which oppressed them.

The mortification of the abbé Bossuet was equal to their joy. “ Fenelon,” he writes to the bishop of Meaux, “ is a wild beast, to be hunted down for the honour of the mitre and of truth, till he is quite subdued and rendered incapable of doing further mischief. Did not St. Augustin pursue Julian even to death ? It is necessary to deliver the church from the greatest enemy she ever had. It is my opinion that neither the bishops, nor the king, can, in conscience, allow any rest to the archbishop of Cambray.”

In the course of the discussion, it was frequently suggested to Fenelon, that he might make a useful diversion in his favour, by retorting on Bossuet, that the expressions which Bossuet used in combatting

disinterested love, went as far to the ruin of charity as the language of Fenelon, in the support of disinterested love, went to the ruin of hope; but those suggestions were rejected by Fenelon: "there might," he said, "be prudence in such a measure; but let me live and die in simplicity."

It is necessary to mention a circumstance in the controversy, which gave particular scandal. In the days of their intimacy Fenelon had communicated, in writing, to Bossuet, the cardinal de Noailles, and M. Tronson, an account of the most secret dispositions of his conscience. Among them, it was called his confession. Alluding to it, Fenelon, in the course of the controversy, accused Bossuet of revealing his confession. Bossuet held out this to the public as a charge of having betrayed Fenelon's sacramental confession. Such a disclosure is justly considered, among roman catholics, as a crime of the blackest die. In roman catholic countries it is punishable with death, and none but a

villain, in whom every sentiment of religion, virtue, and honour is lost, is supposed to be capable of it. Bossuet's representation of this fact raised a storm of indignation against Fenelon; but it was immediately explained by him to the satisfaction of the public, and Bossuet never returned to the charge: but the language in which Fenelon made the charge, was very blameable. The public at large was wholly ignorant of the circumstance which explained it, and could not therefore but suppose that Bossuet stood accused by Fenelon of revealing his sacramental confession.

## CHAP. XII.

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*THE POPE'S CONDEMNATION OF FENELON'S  
"MAXIMS OF THE SAINTS."*

A. D. 1699. ÆT. 48.

STILL the proceedings at Rome lingered: the pope had begun by appointing twelve consultors, who were to hold their meetings in the chamber of the master of the Sacred Palace; they held twelve meetings, and finally, were divided in their opinions. The pope then appointed a congregation of cardinals: they met, in consultation, twelve times without coming to any resolution: he then appointed a new congregation of cardinals;



they met in consultation fifty-two times, and at length extracted from Fenelon's work, several censurable propositions, and reported them to the pope : after which, they had thirty-seven meetings to settle the form of the censure. During all this time private conferences on the subject were continually held by the pope's direction, and sometimes in his presence.

Lewis the fourteenth's impatience at the delay was now shewn in a marked manner. He wrote to the pope in strong terms : he states in his letter to his holiness, that, " while he expected from his zeal and friendship a speedy decision on the archbishop's book, he could not hear, without sorrow, that the sentence so necessary to the peace of the church, was delayed by the artifices of those, to whose interest the delay was of advantage." He entreats his holiness, in the most pressing terms, to pronounce sentence immediately. He accompanied his letter with one to the cardinal de Bouillon, his ambassador at

Rome, making him responsible for the event.

It was evident that the pope sought to avoid a final decision : the height of the subject, almost always above reason, made it difficult to express an opinion upon it, in such terms as should be both intelligible and exact ; and it was difficult to censure any of Fenelon's propositions, without censuring a proposition of a similar sound, in the writings of some writer, of whom the roman catholic church thinks with respect. Besides,— though Fenelon always declared his determination to submit implicitly to the judgment of the roman see, and much docility might be expected from him, it was felt that such an act of submission was an effort of heroic humility, almost beyond the power of human nature, and therefore not to be taken for granted. If Fenelon should not submit, there was a powerful party, and, at a time not very distant, there might be a powerful monarch, who would espouse his cause, and this might bring fresh troubles

into the church, already too much agitated by the disciples of Jansenius. It was also observed to the pope, that, in many respects, it was merely a dispute of words. On the habitual state of disinterested divine love, the attainment of which was said to be inculcated in Fenelon's writings, Fenelon himself uniformly declared his opinion that a permanent state of divine love, without hope and without fear, was above the lot of man; and Bossuet himself allowed that there might be moments, when a soul, dedicated to the love of God, would be lost in heavenly contemplation, and love, and adore without being influenced either by hope or fear, or being sensible of either. As to the sacrifice of eternal bliss, an offer of which, Fenelon was said to consider as the ultimate effort of heroic resignation to the divine will, Fenelon assimilated it to the wish of Moses, to be blotted from the book of life, (Ex. c. 32. v. 32, 33, 34.), and to the wish of St. Paul, (Rom. c. 9. v. 3.) to be an anathema, - for the sake of those for whom

they interceded. Bossuet justly contended, that both the patriarch and the apostle were to be understood, with an implied supposition, that the sacrifice which they offered was consonant to his will, and might tend to his glory. This was admitted by Fenelon, but he contended that the similar expressions of modern mystics should receive a similar construction. As to the strange comparisons, the extravagant suppositions, and the language of fondness used by madame de Guyon and other mystics in expressing their love of God, and their communion with him, which were reprobated in the harshest terms by Bossuet, Fenelon admitted that they could not be censured too severely, if it were just to construe them strictly; but he contended that theological precision could not be required, with justice, from such writers; and that these expressions should be treated, merely as effusions of pure and fervent minds, who, feeling nothing wrong in themselves, suspected nothing wrong in others:

and, as to the charge of advocating the cause of madame de Guyon ; Fenelon expressly declared his readiness to desist from any defence of her, and even from mentioning her name ; he allowed that her writings were in some respects justly censurable ; but he alledged, that much was imputed to her, of what she was not guilty, and that her real errors were greatly exaggerated, and, on that account he avowed an unwillingness to subscribe to a general censure either of her conduct or her writings.

With these explanations, the real difference between Bossuet and Fenelon was not very great ; and perhaps rather to be felt than very accurately defined or described. On this ground, it was suggested to the pope, that, without pronouncing a formal decision on the points in contest, it would be prudent in him, to be satisfied with issuing a brief, in which the general doctrine of the church should be accurately propounded, and both parties required to abstain from future discussions. It appears that the pope

himself inclined to this plan ; but, unfortunately for Fenelon, Lewis the fourteenth had made himself a party in the cause, and Lewis the fourteenth was too powerful a suitor, to be denied justice. In spite even of this circumstance, the final decision of the cause was repeatedly postponed, and the papal balance remained steady for a period of time, which the adversaries of Fenelon thought very long. At last it trembled, with a slight preponderance, against Fenelon.—The pope issued a brief, by which twenty three propositions, reduceable to the two we have mentioned, were extracted from the obnoxious work, and condemned; but the expressions used in the condemnation of them, were gentle ; the propositions were said to be condemned because they might insensibly lead the faithful to errors already condemned by the catholic church ; and because they contained propositions, which, in the sense of the words which immediately presented itself, and according to the order and connections of the senti-

ments, were rash, scandalous, ill-sounding, offensive to pious ears, pernicious in practice, and erroneous ; but none of them was said to be heretical, and the name of Fenelon, as the author of them, was not once mentioned in the brief. These circumstances soothed the sorrow of the friends of Fenelon, and considerably mortified his adversaries. Their mortification was increased by a *bon mot* of the pope, which was soon in every mouth, that Fenelon was in fault for too great love of God ; and his enemies equally in fault, for too little love of their neighbour.

“ Now is the time come,” wrote the good abbé de Chanterac to his friend, “ to put in practice whatever religion has taught you to be most holy, in a perfect conformity to the will of God. You and all attached to you, must be obedient to Jesus Christ, to death, even to the death of the cross. You will want all your piety, all the submission which you have so often promised the pope

in your letters, to possess your soul in patience, when you read the brief, which he has just published against your book.—It was mentioned to me, that I ought to see him, to assure him of your submission.—All of us together cannot be so much affected, as he appears to be, for what may be painful to you in his brief,—most pious, most holy, most learned ;—were epithets he often applied to you. All your friends here think you should receive this brief with the most perfect submission; and that the more simple your submission shall be, the more acceptable it will be to God and man. Jesus Christ agonized on the cross, exposed to the judgments of men, appears to me the true model which religion now holds out for your imitation, and to which the Holy Ghost wishes you to conform. It is chiefly in situations like that, in which providence has now placed you, that the just man lives by faith, and that we ought to be founded and rooted in the charity of



Jesus Christ. Who shall separate us from it? never was I so intimately united to you for eternity.”

The first information of the pope's brief was conveyed by Fenelon's brother to him at the moment he ascended the pulpit of his cathedral to preach; and the news of it was immediately circulated through the congregation. Fenelon recollected himself, paused for a few minutes, and then, changing the plan of his sermon, preached on the duty of obedience to the church. The subject of his discourse, the sentiments it expressed; the religious calm with which it was delivered; the solemn engagement he contracted by it to practise on that trying occasion; the submission which he preached drew tears of sorrow, respect, and admiration from the whole audience.

The first moment it was in his power, Fenelon published a pastoral letter, addressed to all the faithful of his district:—“Our holy father,” he says in it, “has condemned my book, entitled the ‘Maxims

of the Saints,' and has condemned, in a particular manner, twenty-three propositions extracted from it. We adhere to his brief, and condemn the book, and the twenty-three propositions, simply, absolutely, and without a shadow of reserve." He sent his pastoral letter to the pope, and solemnly assured his holiness, that he would never attempt to elude his sentence, or raise any questions on its regard.

"Thus," to use the language of the chancellor d'Aguesseau, "the archbishop of Cambray, who had fought like a lion in defence of his work, while there was a chance of victory, or even a chance of not being conquered, submitted in an instant, like the lowliest sheep of his flock. His pastoral letter, short and affecting, comforted his friends, afflicted his enemies, and falsified every prediction which had been made of the nice subtleties and distinctions with which he would seek to disguise his defeat." M. de Bausset gives extracts of several letters written by Fenelon, about

this time ; all of them breathe an amiable spirit of peace and resignation, but, in general, he declined all writing and discourse on the subject, and, at an early moment, almost wholly dismissed the controversy from his thoughts.

After what has been seen of the letters of the abbé Phillippeaux and the abbé Bossuet, it will not be surprizing, that the former spoke of Fenelon's pastoral letter, as consisting of dry expressions, and vague words ; or that the latter should say, " that it was easy to discover its ambiguity and pride, and impossible to read it without indignation." But, who can read without surprise, that the bishop of Meaux himself, said of it, " the cabal exalts the letter ; disinterested persons think it full of ambiguity and pride ;"—or that he should write to his nephew, who continued at Rome, " after all, I think Rome should be satisfied with the archbishop's letter : it contains the essential, and expresses, however pompously, his submission." He sent his ne-

phew some remarks on it, but desired him to keep them to himself. The bishop of Chartres thought of it very differently; he wrote to Fenelon, that “ he was delighted with his perfect submission: I have no words to express how my heart is affected with your humble and generous action.” The pope addressed a letter to Fenelon, much less kind, and less honourable to him than it would have been if Lewis the fourteenth’s name had not been called in to chill its terms.

With the single exception of the cardinal Cassanaté, a decided partizan of France, all the cardinals desired the abbé de Chanterac to testify to Fenelon their respect and attachment. With friendly and wise solicitude, they advised him to observe the most rigid silence on the subject, and particularly to avoid further retractions, or explanations; they observed to him, that his act of submission was perfect, that the pope was satisfied with it, and that no one therefore had a right to require more from

him on the subject:—"It is impossible," writes the abbé de Chanterac to him, "to praise, more than they did, your submission, your pastoral letter, your letters to the pope, the whole of your conduct. Some things they said to me on the subject must be reserved for private conversation."

It might be expected that the ready and perfect submission of Fenelon would soften the mind of Lewis the fourteenth; but he persisted in the line of extreme rigour, and Fenelon was to drink the cup of his humiliation to its dregs. The metropolitan prelates of his kingdom were ordered, by the king, to convene their suffragans, and, at an assembly of them, to accept the brief. The cardinal of Noailles, as archbishop of Paris, first assembled his suffragans. The assembly consisted of himself and the bishops of Meaux, Chartres, and Blois. As the three first of them had been the leaders of the attack on Fenelon, decency seemed to require, that some other metropolitan assembly should take the lead; but the

court's opinion was known, and zeal was the order of the day. Instead of confining themselves to the acceptance of the brief, the cardinal and his suffragans petitioned the king for a general suppression of all the writings, which Fenelon had published in his defence : in this superfluous display of zeal, seven of the remaining fifteen metropolitan assemblies followed their example.

All the metropolitan assemblies spoke in high terms of Fenelon's piety, virtue, and talents : some of them, among which was the metropolitan assembly of Paris, commended his submission as simple, absolute, and without any restriction. The wording of the declaration of that assembly was entrusted to Bossuet ; and he mentions, in a letter to his nephew, that much of it, as he has prepared it, was softened. But, it was among his own suffragans that Fenelon met with the harshest usage. The bishop of Tournay intimated, that Fenelon's pastoral letter did not express an internal acquiescence in the brief of the pope. Fene-

don, with mild dignity, repelled the imputation; and the bishops of Arras and St. Omers, his other suffragans, stood up in his support.

The next step of the court was to procure the registration of the brief. This, on account of some want of formality, was attended with difficulty, but the overpowering influence of Lewis the fourteenth, levelled every obstacle. The brief was presented for registration by the chancellor d'Aguesseau, then first attorney general of his majesty. He pronounced, on that occasion, a discourse, which the president Henault describes, "as an immortal monument of the solidity of the church of France, and an eternal honor to the chancellor's memory." M. d'Aguesseau mentions in it Fenelon's submission in terms of high praise; "no discordant voice troubled the holy concert, the happy harmony of the oracles of the church. What was the joy of the church, when she found that he, among the prelates, whose opposition she would have



had most to fear, if his heart had been an accomplice of his understanding, had, more humble and more docile than the lowliest of his flock, anticipated the judgment of the prelates, and, by pronouncing an afflicting but salutary sentence on himself, hastened to encourage the church, frightened at his doctrine, by professing readily and solemnly, a submission without reserve, an obedience without bound, and an acquiescence without a shadow of restriction."

The chancellor informs us, that in his discourse, as he had originally penned it, he had expressed himself in stronger terms, in the praise of Fenelon, but that, when the discourse was read in manuscript to the king, he objected to them.—It is remarkable that the chancellor, who, in every part of his voluminous works, writes with more than roman gravity, appears always to have a smile on his countenance when he mentions quietism: he evidently considered it rather as an intrigue of the court than an



affair of religion. The celebrated Leibniz, (Tom. 5, page 189, *Cogit. Miscellaneæ*,) observes, that, before the war of words began, the prelates should have agreed on a definition of the word love, and that such a definition would have prevented the dispute.

After the registration of the pope's brief in parliament, it only remained that a report should be made of the affair to the next assembly of the clergy.

This was intrusted to Bossuet, and he penned this report in the language of moderation. "It was justly observed," he says in it, "that the archbishop of Cambray, who had more interest than any other person, in eluding, if it had been possible, the sentence which condemned him, was the first to submit to it, and expressed his submission by a formal act. We recollect with joy the names of the illustrious bishops whom he imitated on this occasion. Following the example of the king, all the provinces united in praising that

submission : and thus it was shown, that all, which it had been found necessary to say against the work, had been spoken without any breach of charity." These expressions of Bossuet, as they apply to Fenelon, are very cold ; they are less an eulogy of Fenelon than an artful conclusion, from premises which did not allow it, in favour of the vehemence of conduct, with which Bossuet knew he was generally reproached, and which Fenelon's humble submission tended to place in its worst light.

In speaking of madame de Guyon, Bossuet says,—“ As to the abominations, which seemed the necessary consequences of her doctrine, they were wholly out of the question ; she herself always mentioned them with horror.”

In this solemn and explicit declaration of the innocence of her morals, ended the various charges and insinuations which had been made against madame de Guyon with so much publicity, and with such parade.

Here the affair of quietism ends. At the close of his account of it, M. de Bausset expresses himself in terms, which, if we make some allowance for his fear of saying any thing harsh of Lewis the fourteenth, may be considered a fair representation of the merit and demerit of the general conduct of the principal actors. All of them, he says, preserved in it the character of greatness, which posterity has stamped on them. Seduced by his own virtuous mind, Fenelon thought that the highest degree of virtue attainable by man, was to unite himself to the divine perfections, by a love of God, free from interest; and he rectified, in the writings which he published in his defence, all that was incorrect or equivocal in the work which was the subject of dispute;—Bossuet, crowned with triumph and glory, preserved his high rank of oracle of the gallican church: but Fenelon was blameable for his admiration of the supposed spiritual gifts of a visionary woman, for

permitting his admiration of them to prevail over his better reason, and to prevent his surrendering opinions, perhaps less erroneous in themselves than in the terms in which he expressed them, to the peace of the church. On the other hand, Bossuet was blameable for connecting a mere question of doctrine with a personal charge of the worst kind, against an estimable and amiable adversary.

Having thus assigned to Bossuet and Fenelon, what he considers their due share of praise and blame, M. de Bausset proceeds to his great idol :—Lewis the fourteenth, he says, comes before us in his proper light ; he does not pretend to be a judge of doctrine, he does not pretend to dictate to the church, he petitions for a clear decision, and when he receives it, then, as the external bishop, he causes it to be executed according to the canons, and as sovereign, he causes it to be executed with legal formality. But had not Lewis the fourteenth

his share of blame? By his severities to Fenelon and his friends, by his marked support of Bossuet, by his pointed instructions to his ambassadors, by his letters, almost menacing, to the pope, did not the external bishop attempt to influence the decision, did he not anticipate the judgment?

On the pope, M. de Bausset is silent: to this writer, the pope appears the only actor in the business, whose conduct was perfectly free from blame. The real errors in the work of Fenelon, which was denounced to the pope, would have justified a more severe censure, or rather a censure expressed in harsher terms than the pope adopted. To the extreme of severity, the pope was repeatedly urged, (and we have seen in what terms,) by the french monarch: but he listened to meekness, and to wisdom, which is always meek. He pronounced a censure, afflicting to Fenelon, but much milder than the king required or extreme justice warranted. He generously wept over the virtue, the piety, and the talents, the

abuse of which he was forced to condemn, and did every thing in his power to heal the wound he was obliged to inflict.

Fenelon's submission, however, made him the hero of the day. "It stands a solitary example in history," says the chancellor d'Aguesseau, "of a controversy upon a point of doctrine, which one single sentence terminated, at the instant, without its reproduction in any other form, and without any attempt to reverse it by power, or to elude it by distinctions. The glory of it is due to Fenelon."

Some attempts were made to effect a reconciliation between Fenelon and his episcopal antagonists, but such a reconciliation never took place. M. de Bausset, however, informs his readers, that he has discovered vestiges of a friendly correspondence, after the affair of quietism, between Fenelon and the bishop of Chartres; and cites a letter of madame de Maisonfort, which mentions a projected journey of M. de St. André, the confidential grand-vicar

of Bossuet, to Cambray, for the purpose of bringing about a reconciliation between Bossuet and Fenelon. It appears that Fenelon uniformly expressed himself of Bossuet with respect, and mentioned his talents and the services he had rendered to religion, with admiration.

It is singular, that at a subsequent time, when Bossuet was worn down with age and infirmity, he applied to Lewis the fourteenth, to nominate his nephew, the abbé Bossuet, of whom such frequent mention has been made in the preceding pages, to be his coadjutor, and of course his successor, in the bishoprick of Meaux, and that he met with an absolute refusal. After the death of the abbé de Phillippeaux, the other agent of Bossuet, a relation of quietism, supposed to be written by him, was published at Paris; and, on the application of some of the family of Fenelon, was declared, by an *arrêt du concile*, to be scandalous and defamatory, and ordered to be publicly burnt.

A question has been made, whether Fenelon was sincere in his retractation. On this point, we have the testimony of the chevalier Ramsay. In a formal conversation, which he had with Fenelon; the chevalier observed to him, that he could not reconcile his condemnation of his book, with his adherence to his avowed opinion of the possible existence of a pure, and absolutely disinterested love of God. Fenelon replied, "that in condemning his book, the church had not condemned the pure love of God; that it had only condemned the expressions used by him, in explaining it, and those," he admitted, "were unfit for a dogmatical work. My book," he said to the chevalier, "is good for nothing; it is an abortion of imagination, it is not a work of the heart; I wish you not to read it." The doctrine itself remained dear to Fenelon's till it ceased to beat. He left behind him a voluminous manuscript on the subject, to be delivered to the pope after his decease.



We have seen that madame de Guyon was imprisoned, soon after the dispute on quietism first broke out : a short time after its termination, she was released. She then retired to Blois, where she passed the remainder of her days in retirement and devotion, entirely silent on the events of her life, her principles, and her writings. She died at an advanced age, adored by the poor, and universally esteemed. In every vicissitude of life, she preserved the esteem of the hotel de Beauvilliers, and her other distinguished friends. A few days before her death she made her will : she prefixes to it a profession of her faith, of the purity of her intentions, and her submission to the church.

To close this account, perhaps too minute, and therefore already too long, of the affair of quietism, it remains only to mention, the steady affection which all the antient friends of Fenelon, with the single exception of madame de Maintenon, preserved for him during the long continu-

ance of the court's displeasure. Nothing could exceed their attachment to him. He was a bond of union which cemented them together, for many a good and kind purpose. "They took every opportunity," says the duke de St. Simon, "of meeting together ; it was their delight to talk of Fenelon, to regret him, to express their wishes for his return to them, to contrive means of seeing him."

But none of them was more warmly or steadily attached to Fenelon than his former pupil, the duke of Burgundy. Lewis the fourteenth enjoined him not to correspond with Fenelon, and spies were placed near each of them to prevent their intercourse. Four years elapsed before there was the slightest communication between them : the duke then contrived to send a letter to Fenelon. — "At length, my dear archbishop," writes the amiable youth, "I have an opportunity of breaking the silence, which for these four years, I have been obliged to keep with you. I

have suffered much since we parted ; but one of my greatest sufferings has been, not to have it in my power, during all this time, to testify to you how much I felt for you, and to assure you, that my friendship for you has increased with your misfortunes. I shall not say how much I am disgusted with what has been done in your regard." He gives the archbishop an account of his studies ; " I think," he says, " that I persist more steadily than I did, in the path of virtue : but pray to God for me, that he will please to strengthen me in my good resolutions, and not suffer me to offend him again." Fenelon's answer is most affectionate ; it contains much good advice, expressed in the most affectionate language, but scarcely one word of himself, or his misfortunes : " My mind," he says in it, " is at rest ; my greatest misfortune is not to see you. I would give a thousand lives as a drop of water, to see you what God wishes you to be."

## CHAP. XIII.

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*TELEMACHUS.*

**DURING** the disputes concerning quietism, a circumstance took place, which increased, and perhaps unalterably fixed the aversion of Lewis the fourteenth to Fenelon:—the publication of *Telemachus*.

It appears to have been composed by Fenelon, while he was preceptor to the royal dukes. Not long after the affair of quietism broke out, Fenelon gave the manuscript of it to a valet de chambre, to be copied by him; and the valet sold it to a bookseller at Paris. The police at that time narrowly watched the motions of Fe-

nelon ; they had notice of the publication, and, when the bookseller was at the 208th page of the impression, seized, in the king's name, all the copies which were found in the possession of the bookseller ; and every precaution was used to annihilate the work. But it was too late ; the manuscript was preserved ; it was sold to Adrian Moetjens, a bookseller at the Hague, and by him it was immediately printed. This edition appeared in 1699 ; and is very incorrect. Editions of it were rapidly multiplied ; it was translated into every european language, and universally read and admired.

Immediately on its appearance, it was supposed to contain an intentional and pointed satyr of Lewis the fourteenth, his court, and his government. Calypso was supposed to be the marchioness of Montespan ; Eucharis, mademoiselle de Fontanges ; Telemachus, the duke of Burgundy ; Mentor, the duke of Beauvilliers ; Antiopé, the duchess of Burgundy ; Protesilaus, Lou-

vois ; Idomeneus, our king James the second ; Sesostris, Lewis the fourteenth.

It does not appear, and Fenelon himself always denied, that in the composition of the work, he intended to pourtray these objects, or intended to lead the attention of his readers to them : but it is easy to suppose, that, as he unavoidably wrote it under a strong impression of what immediately passed under his eye, the work would contain a more striking resemblance of the scenes passing before him, and of the principal actors in them, than it would have discovered, if the author had lived at a distance from them. Admitting, however, that no such individual resemblance was intended, or can be fairly traced in Telemachus, still, it contained enough to excite the monarch's highest displeasure. The disrespectful mention which is made, in every part of it, of ambition, of extensive conquest, of military fame, of magnificence, and of almost every thing else, which Lewis the fourteenth considered

as the glory of his reign, could not but prejudice the monarch against the writer. When he reflected that it was the production of one, on whom he had conferred splendid marks of his favor, he could not but think the publication an act of ingratitude ; when he recollected that the preceptor had probably instilled the principles of the work into the heir of his throne, the preceptor would naturally become an object of personal hatred ; and these feelings would be much aggravated by the reception which the work met with, in the countries whom Lewis the fourteenth viewed as his natural enemies, and who, soon after its first publication, confederated for the destruction of him and his family. He knew their hatred of him, and whatever they cherished, he could not but consider as hostile to him.

In the monarch's general dislike of the work, madame de Maintenon unavoidably shared ; and, as Lewis the fourteenth suspected her of a partiality to Fenelon, her

interest required that she should take every opportunity of expressing her disapprobation of the author, and that she should be forward in condemning the offending work. This was soon perceived by the courtiers: they quickly saw that Telemachus was never to be mentioned.—Fenelon was a member of the french academy: when his successor was received into it, both his successor and the member who presided at that sitting of the academy, pronounced an eulogium of Fenelon, and praised his other works, but neither of them mentioned Telemachus.

After several editions of Telemachus had been printed, on the model of the edition of 1699, Moetjens himself gave a more perfect edition of it in 1701; and that edition was generally followed, in all subsequent editions, till the edition of 1717. In that year, the marquis of Fenelon, great nephew to the archbishop, published a new edition of Telemachus, from a copy corrected by Fenelon himself. With the leave



of the regent, the marquis dedicated this edition to Lewis the fifteenth, who was then in his eighth year. This edition became the *textus receptus*, or the model from which all subsequent impressions of *Telemachus* have been taken.

As a composition, *Telemachus* has perhaps received its full measure of praise. It is eminently defective in unity of design, abounds with unnecessary details, is often prosaic ; its moral is oftener taught by long discourses, than by action, the proper vehicle of moral in an epic poem ; and it contains more of profane love, than might be expected from a man of prayer, always writing at the foot of the cross ; but it abounds with passages of exquisite beauty, and contains some of true sublimity. A soft tinge of poetic, and, it may be said, of religious melancholy is shed over the whole, which seems to elevate it to real poetry, gives it an indescribable charm, and interests the reader, both for the author and his hero. We find, by M. de Bausset, that

Mentor's apology to Telemachus, for the faults of kings, was inserted in the manuscript, long after the first edition of the work, and consequently long after

“ The haughty Bourbon's unrelenting hate—”  
DRYDEN.

had sealed the author's doom.

## CHAP. XIV.

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*FENELON'S OTHER LITERARY WORKS, AND GENERAL LITERARY CHARACTER.*

THE mention of Telemachus, naturally leads to some account of the other works of Fenelon, and a general view of his literary character.

All his writings show much grandeur and delicacy of sentiment, great fertility of genius, a correct taste, and exquisite sensibility. The poetical character appears in them all; but generally, it is poetry, descended from the heavens, to converse familiarly with man, and lead him, by her sweetest and simplest strains, to virtue and

happiness. By assiduous study, the works of the best writers of antiquity became familiar to him; he imbibed their spirit; and his intimate acquaintance with their writings, was his resource in every vicissitude in life, his ornament in prosperity, his comfort in adverse fortune: and, in the memorable contest we have mentioned, in which every thing dear to him was involved, the charm which it spread over his writings, enabled him to divide the world in his favor, against his mighty adversary.

He appears to have formed himself more on the Greek than the Roman. All the good writers of antiquity are far removed from the extremes of simplicity and refinement; but the greek, by their greater simplicity, have an evident advantage over the roman. The writings of Fenelon, when quietism did not entangle him in its refinements, are distinguished by simplicity both of sentiment and expression. Without appearing to be measured, his periods are

mellifluous, and, by a profusion, sometimes perhaps carried to excess, of the little connective words, which the french language possesses much more than the english, but in no proportion to the greek, each of his sentences always leads to the following, and harmonises with it both in sense and sound. His *Telemachus*, and his replies to Bossuet, contain many passages of great splendor and pathos; but their greatest beauty is their tender simplicity. This attached every reader to him, and gave Bossuet those sleepless nights which he ingenuously owned. The greatest fault of his writings is, that they abound with what, in music, is called *rosalia*, a repetition of the same idea in the next higher notes.

After *Telemachus*, the principal literary work of Fenelon is, his *Dialogues sur l'Eloquence en general, et sur celle de la chaire en particulier*: it was published after his death. The chief aim of it is to shew, that the real object of eloquence, is to excite in the auditors, virtuous and noble

sentiments, and to impel them to generous and virtuous deeds ; and that, when eloquence falls short of this, it fails of its end. He particularly applies this observation to the eloquence of the pulpit : we shall present the reader with a general view of what he says on this subject, when we shall have occasion to mention his own sermons.

On popular oratory he observes, that the first thing to be required of a public speaker is, that he should be a virtuous man : this, he pronounces to be indispensable to the success of his eloquence. He asks, “ how is a mercenary and ambitious orator to cure his country of corruption and ambition ? If riches are his aim, how is he to correct the venality of his countrymen ? I know,” says Fenelon, “ that a virtuous and disinterested orator should not be permitted to want the necessaries of life ; but let him put himself in the way of not wanting them ; let his manners be simple, unpretending, frugal, and laborious ; if necessary, let him work with his own hands, for his

subsistence. The public may confer honors on him, may invest him with authority : but, if he is master of his passions, if he is really disinterested, he will never make any use of his authority for his private advantage ; he will always be ready to resign it, when he cannot preserve it without dissimulation or flattery. To persuade the people, an orator should be incorruptible : his eloquence and talents will otherwise ruin the state. Where a man has his fortune in view, he must please every one, and manage every one ; how is such a man to obtain an ascendant over his countrymen ? Does he seek riches ? let him embrace some of the professions by which riches are required : but, let him not make his speeches in the public cause, the means of acquiring them."

Fenelon observes of Cicero, " that the speeches which he made, while he was young, rather amuse the mind than move the heart ;" that, he seems rather occupied

by a wish of exciting admiration, than by his client's cause ; yet that even in the most flowery of these harangues, he shows great talents of persuasion and of moving the passions. But it is in the harangues which he made in the cause of the republic, when he was advanced in life, that he appears to advantage. Then experience in affairs of magnitude, the love of liberty, and the view of the dangers which surrounded him, raised him to efforts worthy of a great orator. When he is to support the cause of dying liberty, to animate the republic against Anthony, you have no longer a play of words, no longer an antithesis ; then, he is negligent ; he finds in nature, all that is wanting to seize, to animate, to carry off his hearers.

Of antithesis, the bane of modern writings, Fenelon says :—" I do not absolutely proscribe antithesis ; when the things to be expressed are naturally opposed to each other, it is proper to mark their opposition. There, antithesis is the natural and simple



form of expression ; but to go out of the way to form batteries of words is childish."

In the same work, Fenelon observes, that, " to a perfect intelligence of the sacred writings, some previous acquaintance with the works of Homer, Plato, Xenophon, and other celebrated writers of antiquity, is absolutely necessary. After this, the scripture," he says, " will no longer surprise." The same customs, the same mode of narrative, the same splendid imagery, the same pathetic touches are found in each. Where they differ, the advantage is wholly on the side of the scripture ; it infinitely surpasses all the writers of antiquity in simplicity, in spirit, in grandeur. Homer himself never approaches the sublimity of the canticles of Moses ; of that canticle in particular, which all the children of Israel were obliged to learn by heart. No greek or latin poetry is comparable to the psalms. That, which begins, " The God of Gods, the Lord hath spoken, and hath called up

the earth," exceeds whatever human imagination has produced. Neither Homer, nor any other poet, equals Isaiah, in describing the majesty of God, in whose presence empires are as a grain of sand, the whole universe as a tent, which, to day is set up, and removed to morrow. Sometimes, as when he paints the charms of peace, Isaiah has the softness and sweetness of an eclogue ; at others, he soars above mortal conception. But, what is there in profane antiquity, comparable to the wailings of Jeremy when he mourns over the calamities of his people ? or to Nahum, when he foresees, in spirit, the downfall of Nineveh, under the assault of an innumerable army ? We almost behold the formidable host, and hear the arms and the chariots.—Read Daniel, denouncing to Balthazar, the vengeance of God, ready to fall upon him ; compare it with the most sublime passages of pagan antiquity ; you find nothing comparable to it. It must be added that, in the scriptures, every thing

sustains itself; whether we consider the the historical, the legal, or the poetical part of it, the proper character appears in all.

On the writings of the antient fathers, he has the following judicious observations. "Some well informed persons have not always done to the fathers the justice due to them. They seem to have formed their opinion of them by a harsh metaphor of Tertullian, a swollen period of St. Cyprian, an obscure passage of St Ambrose, a subtle jingling antithesis of St. Augustin, or a quibble of St. Peter Chrysologus. But we ought to consider how much the fathers were necessarily influenced by the generally depraved taste of the times in which they lived. Good taste began to decay at Rome, soon after the Augustan æra. Juvenal possesses less delicacy than Horace; both Seneca the tragic writer, and Lucan, have a disagreeable and turgid style. In Greece, attic literature had fallen into neglect, before St. Paul or St. Gregory Nazianzen wrote. A kind of minute scholas-

tic subtlety had taken place of sound taste and judgment. The fathers were generally educated by the wrangling rhetoricians of their times, and naturally fell into the general manner : yet they seem continually to struggle against it. To speak in a simple and natural manner was then generally esteemed a fault : declamation, not eloquence, was the leading object. But if we bestow on the writings of the fathers a patient and impartial perusal, we shall discover in them pearls of inestimable value. St. Cyprian possesses a greatness of spirit, and a vehemence, resembling those of Demosthenes. We find in St. Chrysostom an exquisite judgment, noble images, a feeling and amiable morality. St. Augustin is at once sublime and popular ; he rises into dignity, by the most simple expressions. He converses, he interrogates, he answers. It is a conversation between him and his hearers ; his similes, generally introduced very opportunely, throw light on his subject. He sometimes

descends to the coarseness of the populace, but it is to reform them, and he leads them by it to what is right. St. Bernard was a prodigy, in a barbarous age. We find in him delicacy, elevation, sentiment, tenderness, and vehemence. We shall be astonished at the beauty and grandeur which we meet in the fathers, if we take into consideration the times in which they wrote. We readily pardon the pompous diction of Montaigne, the obsolete diction of Marot ; why not shew the same indulgence to the fathers ? Why not ascribe their defects to the defects of the times in which they lived ?”

The *letters* of Fenelon have been generally admired ; they appear to have been chiefly written on the impulse of the moment, without study, and without the least view to publication. The greater part of them are on subjects of piety : but many of them are addressed to persons in public situations, or engaged in the ordinary affairs of life, and abound with profound

and delicate observations. “What you have most to fear,” he writes to a young nobleman, “is idleness and dissipation. Idleness is as prejudicial in the world, as it is criminal before God. A soft and indolent man, must always be a poor creature. If he is placed in any considerable situation, he is sure to disgrace it. If he has the most brilliant talents, idleness prevents his making any use of them. He cannot cultivate them, or acquire the information wanted for the proper discharge of his duties, or make necessary exertions, or accommodate himself, for any length of time, to those, whom it is his duty or his interest to conciliate. What can be done for such a man? Business wearies him, serious reading fatigues him, military duty interrupts his pleasures, attendance at court is irksome to him.—Pride alone should make such a being insupportable to himself.

“Do you beware of this wretched existence. At court, with the king, in the

army, among the generals, wherever you may be, exert yourself to behave with civility. Endeavour to acquire that politeness, which shews a respectful deference to every one. No airs of dignity, no affectation, no bustle; learn to behave to every one according to his rank, his reputation, his merit, and his credit. Give to merit, esteem; to talents, when virtue and confidence accompany them, confidence and attachment; to rank, civility, and ceremony. On days of general representation, speak to every one, but enter into particular conversation with none. Bad company is always disgraceful; it is ruinous to a young man, who has not yet an established character. It is excusable to see few persons, but nothing excuses your seeing a single person of a blasted reputation. Shew such persons no indignity, but keep them at a great distance.

“ A seclusion from the world to indulge in idleness is dishonorable; but a retire-

ment, employed in acts of duty or professional exertions, acquires general esteem.

“As to general acquaintance, consider them as a kind of imperfect friends, upon whom you should not rely; and whom, except from urgent necessity, you should never trust; but you should serve them, as opportunity offers, and endeavour to lay them under obligations to you. Among these persons, you are not to look for perfect characters; be most connected with such among them, as are most worthy.

“As to true friends, chuse them with great care; but their number must be small. Have no friend, who does not fear God, who is not wholly governed by the truths of religion. They should be a little older than yourself. To friends like those, open your heart without reserve; and keep nothing secret from them, except the secrets of others.”

Soon after Fenelon was appointed preceptor of the royal princes, he was elected



a member of the french academy. Conformably to an established rule of that institution, he pronounced a discourse before the academy on his reception. Few of the discourses pronounced on these occasions, have survived the day on which they were delivered. Fenelon's was generally admired; the authors of the *Bibliothèque Britannique*, (vol. 19. p. 54,) spoke of it, in terms of great commendation. In one part of it, Fenelon illustrates, by an ingenious comparison, what should be a great object of every writer in the general ordonnance of his work: "the beauties of a literary composition," he says, "should resemble those of architecture; the boldest works are not always the best. No part of an edifice should be constructed with a view to its own particular beauty; each should be constructed with a view to the strength and beauty of the whole."

When the academy projected their Dictionary, they directed M. Dacier, their secretary, to communicate the plan of it to

Fenelon, and to request his thoughts on the design, and the best mode of carrying it into execution. Fenelon replied by a letter, published after his decease, with the title, *Lettre à l'Academie Française*. He does not confine himself to the particular point to which his attention was called by the academy, but throws out many general observations, replete with judgment and taste, on the actual state of literature in France. His remarks on french poetry are interesting, and shew, that in a very advanced age, for they were not written till a very late period of his life, his soul was still wedded to immortal verse. He admits the imperfection of the heroic poetry of his countrymen.

“Our versification,” he says in this letter, “loses, if I not deceived, much more than it gains by rhyme. It loses by it, much of its vivacity, its ease, and its harmony. It frequently happens, that the rhyme, which has cost the poet so much labour, reduces him to the necessity of ex-

tending and weakening his period. He is often forced to employ two or three superfluous verses for the sake of one which he particularly wishes to introduce. We are scrupulous in the choice of rhymes, and anxiously seek for those, which are thought to be rich ; but we are not as scrupulous as we should be about solidity of thought and sentiment, clearness of expression, natural arrangement, and real dignity of language. By rhyme, we gain little except an irksome uniformity of cadence, which is so far from being grateful to the ear, that we carefully avoid it in prose. The repetition of final syllables fatigues us in heroic verses. There is more harmony in those odes and stanzas, in which the rhymes are irregularly arranged ; but our grand heroic strains, which require the most harmonious, the most varied, and the most majestic sound, frequently consist of verses which have no pretence to perfection."

Fenelon's other works principally relate to religious subjects ; a considerable por-

tion of them are of a polemic nature, on the subject of the jansenistical controversy, in which, in his latter years, he took an active part. His *Treatise on the Existence of God*, was addressed, in a course of letters, to the duke of Orleans, the celebrated regent. M. de Bausset shews, that a work, intituled, *Lives of the Philosophers*, often published with his name, is unjustly ascribed to Fenelon.

## CHAP. XV.

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*FENELON IN HIS DIOCESE.*

WHEN Fenelon was nominated to the see of Cambray, every motive of interest and ambition must have prompted him, (in opposition to the canons which called him to his diocese,) to make the court his habitual residence, and must have allured him to it by very specious reasons. In the opinion of the public, and even in his own conscience, if it were usually pliable, such a resolution would require no other apology, than his office of preceptor to the young princes. It would naturally suggest to him, that personal attendance on them was his first obligation.

But Fenelon considered residence in his diocese too sacred a duty to be neglected; and therefore, before he acquiesced in his nomination, he stipulated, that his office should, on no account, prevent his residing with his flock, during nine months of every year. The royal mandate now made his constant residence among them a matter of necessity; and probably, except so far as it separated him from his friends, he found the compliance with it, no great mortification.

A letter written by him to the duke of Beauvilliers, gives a pleasing view of the situation of his mind, soon after he was settled among his flock. “ I work,” he says, in it, “softly and gently, and endeavour, as much as I can, to put myself in the way of being useful to my flock. They begin to love me, I endeavour to make them find me easy of access, uniform in my conduct, and without haughtiness, rigour, interest, or artifice: they appear already to have some confidence in me;

and let me assure you, that even these good Flemminders, with their homely appearance, have more finesse than I wish to put into my conduct towards them. They enquire of one another, whether I really am banished; and they question my servants about it; if they put the question to me, I shall make no mystery of it. It certainly is an affliction to me to be separated from you, and the good duchess, and my other friends; but, from the general scene, I am happy to be at a distance, and sing the canticle of deliverance."

From the recent occurrences of Fénélon's life, it might be natural to expect, that, in the administration of his diocese, he would err by excess of zeal; but from that defect no one was ever more free. To do the kind and common thing while conscience allowed it, to abstain from unnecessary acts of authority, to avoid every display of talent or virtue, to remove by meekness and moderation what was blameable, to improve, with prudence and sobriety, what was good, and always to keep himself and

his own exertions from the public eye, was the uniform tenor of his conduct. During the fifteen years, for which he governed his diocese, his administration of it was uniformly wise and meek; between him and his flock, his chapter, or his clergy, there never was an appearance of discord: though, by his indefatigable zeal, he soon made the district committed to his charge, the model of a well regulated diocese: his biographers do not record of him, a single instance of what are generally called acts of vigour, or even a single instance of star-ving virtue. The peace of heaven was with him, and was communicated by him to all his flock.

He allowed himself a short time for sleep, rose at a very early hour, gave some time to prayer and pious meditation, and then arranged with one of his grand-vicars, the employments of the day. Except on Saturdays, or on festivals particularly celebrated in some church of his diocese, when he officiated there, he said mass every day in his private chapel; on Saturdays, he



said it in his metropolitan church, and, during the rest of that morning heard indiscriminately, the confessions of all who presented themselves. Till nine o'clock, he was visible to those only who attended him by appointment; after that hour, till he dined, his doors were open to all persons who professed to have real business with him. At noon, he dined; his table was suitable to his rank, but he himself was extremely abstemious, eating only the simplest and lightest food, and of that, sparingly. All his chaplains were admitted to his table: it was his general rule to shew them the greatest respect; if he sent them into the country, on any business of his diocese, it was always in one of his own carriages, and with one of his own attendants, that the respect, which he shewed them, might conciliate to them the general respect of his flock. Both before and after dinner, he himself said grace with seriousness, but without affectation: the reader will hear with pleasure that his tried friend,

the virtuous and faithful abbé de Chanterrac, was always placed next him, on his left hand. During dinner, the conversation was general, and strangers were struck equally, with its ease and politeness. After dinner, all the company retired to a large apartment, for about an hour; there, the same stile of conversation was continued, but a small table was sometimes placed before Fenelon, on which he signed his name to papers which required immediate dispatch, and he sometimes took that opportunity of giving directions to his chaplains, on the affairs of his diocese. An hour was spent in this manner, after which, unless he was prevented by urgent business or necessary visits, he lived to himself till nine o'clock, then he supped, and at ten, the whole of his household assembled: one of his chaplains said night-prayers; at the end of them, the archbishop rose, and gave his general blessing to the assembly\*.

\* See Appendix, Note III.

The only recreation of Fenelon was to walk in his garden or in the open country. His letters, like those of Cicero, often express the satisfaction which he felt in retiring, after the agitation and hurry of business, to the simple and interesting scenes of nature. By their stillness and calm, any ruffle of the day was quickly smoothed; and his mind, wearied by study or business, soon recovered its freshness and elasticity. There too, his piety was often invigorated. "The country," he says in one of his letters, "delights me. In the midst of it, I find God's holy peace. O! what excellent company is God! with him one never is alone."—In his country walks with his friends, his conversation was particularly instructive and pleasing: this circumstance is frequently mentioned by his contemporaries. "No person," says the duke de St. Simon, "ever possessed in a higher degree than Fenelon, the happy talent of easy, light, and ever decent conversation; it was perfectly enchanting;

his mild uniform piety troubled no one, and was respected by all. No one felt his superiority ; every one found him on his own level. If you quitted him for a moment, you instantly ran back to him." He often joined the peasants, set down on the grass with them, talked to them, comforted them, went into their cottages, placed himself at table with their families, and partook of their meals.

In the midst of the vexations of Fenelon, during the disputes on quietism, a fire burned to the ground, the archiepiscopal palace at Cambray, and consumed all his books and writings. He bore his misfortune with great resignation. As soon as the abbé de Langeron was informed of it, he hastened to apprise Fenelon of it, and found him conversing with his friends, so much at ease, that he concluded he was ignorant of it, and began with much preparation, to apprise him of it. Fenelon interrupted the abbé ; he told him that he was informed of his loss, and remarked to

him, that “ it was better his palace should be burnt to the ground, than the cottage of a peasant.” At his own expence, he rebuilt the palace, and furnished it in a suitable style of magnificence ; but he did not allow the arms of his family to be fixed or painted on any part of it : he probably recollected how severely, in his dialogues, he had censured the cardinal de Richelieu, for almost covering the Sorbonne with his arms.

An early care of Fenelon, after his settlement in his diocese, was to establish a seminary for completing the education of such of his flock as were intended for the church. He always presided at the examination of those who presented themselves to take orders. These examinations were conducted with such a happy mixture of ease and solemnity, that none ventured to present themselves for ordination, who had not gone through a serious course of previous study, while all were sufficiently at ease to discover, by their behaviour,

their real dispositions and talents. This was so well arranged, that in Fenelon's time, no priest was ordained, who, previously to his ordination, had not been five times examined by Fenelon himself. It was Fenelon's wish to put his seminary under the direction of his beloved sulpiciens, and he intimated his wish to M. Tronson their superior; but fearful of involving his friends in his own disgrace, he avoided pressing it on him.

Twice a week during the lent, he preached in some parish church of his diocese; on solemn festivals, he preached in his metropolitan church; in his visitations of his diocese, he always made a familiar discourse, in the church of the parish which he visited; so that, in his large diocese, there was not a single parish church, in which he had not preached more than once. It was his opinion that, in general, sermons were not sufficiently instructive. "The people," he says, in his dialogues on the eloquence of the pulpit, "hear

continually of the scripture of the church, of the two laws, of the priesthood of Moses, Aaron, Melchisedeck, and of the prophets and apostles ; but little pains are taken to inform them from the pulpit what all this means, or what these persons have done. A preacher should explain to the people regularly and in great detail, the gospels, the mysteries, the origin and institution of the sacraments, the traditions, the discipline, the offices, and the ceremonies of the church. —Such instructions will strengthen their faith, give them a just notion of religion, and, by degrees, enable them to profit of all they see or hear in their churches. Sermons should be short, but frequent, and the same sermon should be often repeated.”

He disliked the divisions and subdivisions of sermons : “ These,” he says, “ were unknown to the fathers. St. Bernard, the last in time of the fathers, often remarks the natural division of his subject, but does not observe it in his sermons.”



Fenelon declares against the practice of committing sermons to writing, and then learning them by heart. "Consider," he says, "the advantage of speaking without minute preparation. The preacher possesses himself; he expresses himself naturally, his words flow immediately from his own sources; his expressions, (if he has a natural talent for eloquence), are lively and moving. The warmth of the moment suggests to him expressions and images, which would not have occurred to him, in his cabinet. His action is natural, and has no appearance of art.—Above all, a preacher, who has learned by experience to discern the effect of his oratory on his audience, observes what fixes their attention, what makes an impression on them, where he fails. He sees where the imagery should be bolder, the principles more fully expressed, the conclusions more distinctly or forcibly pointed. In all these particulars, how generally must a preacher fail, who learns his sermons by heart? Such a



preacher dares not say a word more than is in his lesson ; his style inevitably smells of its labour ; his compositions, as was said of those of Isocrates, are better read than heard. In spite of all his care, there is a monotony, a something forced, in the inflections of his voice. He is not so much a man who speaks, as an orator who recites ; his action is confined, his look shews his dependence on his memory, he dares not abandon himself to the feelings of the moment, least the thread of his discourse should slip from him. The hearer perceives the mechanism of the exhibition, and remains unmoved." In support of his opinion, Fenelon cites St. Augustine, who declares, that " those preachers, who speak their discourses word for word, as they have written them down, cannot repeat and enforce a truth till they perceive that it is perfectly understood ; and thus deprive themselves of one of the most powerful means of instruction." Still, Fenelon admitted a considerable degree of

preparation: he presupposes, that the preacher has seriously meditated his subject; and, (what certainly is taking much for granted), that the speaker has a natural gift of extemporaneous oratory.

As the subject is interesting, we have given Fenelon's sentiments upon it at length: yet perhaps, it is a mere question of words. If an unprepared and a prepared sermon be equal in other respects, the former, being the most natural, must necessarily have a great advantage over the latter: but it must be taken into consideration, that the gift of unpremeditated eloquence is very rare. On the general question, therefore, as leading to practical inference, we must weigh the advantages of extempore eloquence, against the small number of those on whom the gift of it is generally conferred; and, viewing it in this light, we shall be tempted to conclude, that the number of those to whom extempore predication should be recommended, is very small.

This leads to the further enquiry,—which is best, that sermons should be read, or, that they should be spoken by heart. On this point, great authorities differ. It is remarkable, that Bourdaloue, who had no action, and spoke, though distinctly, very rapidly, with his eyes almost closed, and with little inflection of voice, was a decided advocate for the sermons being prepared with great attention, learned by heart, and exactly spoken as it was committed to paper: while Massillon, whose action was both elegant and vehement, and father de la Rue, more celebrated for action than any other preacher in France, maintained the contrary opinion. Father Segaud, (himself a preacher of eminence), thought Fenelon's sermons were evidently the worse for their want of preparation; he admitted that they contained splendid and beautiful passages, but thought the effect of them was destroyed by the weakness of other passages. Father Segaud, however, listened to Fenelon with the cool

attention of a critic: the flock of Fenelon heard him with other ears: to them, he was the good shepherd, who knew his flock; whom his flock knew, and whose voice they loved.

We have already had occasion to mention the attachment of Fenelon's friends to him; M. de Bausset relates many facts, and presents us with extracts of many letters of Fenelon, which show his attachment to them, the warm interest which he took in their concerns, and his great anxiety that the displeasure of the court, under which he laboured, should not be extended to them. To every part of his own family, he was uniformly kind. The extracts of his letters to them, which M. de Bausset has published, are equally replete with religion and good sense. It was natural that his relations should feel, very strongly, the harsh treatment, which Fenelon received from the court, that it should wound their feelings, and sour them against society in general. Fenelon soothes their resentments,

and gives them excellent advice. In a letter to the marquis de Fenelon, one of his great nephews, he says, “If you can find a sensible friend, one who really possesses the fear of God, endeavour to alleviate your mortifications, by opening yourself to him, as far as it is prudent: but be assured, that God is the true friend of the heart, and that there is no comforter like him.—No one so well understands, or so kindly enters into the afflictions of those who have recourse to him; no one accommodates himself so much to their wants.”

In another letter, he says, “you must be persuaded of the pleasure it would give me to have you constantly about me, but your duty calls you to Versailles: you should become acquainted with its inhabitants, and they with you. While even my shadow continues on earth, I wish it to be useful to you; but I am old and at a distance, and our family has now no other help or hope, than what it can derive from your success in the world.—God forbid

that I should make you an ambitious man ! But without being indiscreet or obtrusive, you should put yourself in the way of persons in power, and cultivate all fair opportunities of attracting their good will. Sometimes idleness, sometimes timidity, sometimes a love of ease, assumes an appearance of modesty, and makes a person retire from commerce with the great, when in fact it is mere idleness, or timidity, or a refined self love, which induces him to prefer the company of a few persons with whom he is at ease, and whom he sees pleased with his society. But this is wrong ;—it is proper to despise the world ; but it is also proper to make it subservient to one's laudable views : it is proper to be detached from it from motives of religion, but there is no merit in abandoning it from sloth and caprice. Attend to it, so far as it is your duty, but do not love it from motives of ambition ; neither neglect it from idleness, nor follow it from vanity." The marquis de Fenelon, to whom this letter was written,

appears to have profited by the advice it contained ; he served with distinction in the army, and was appointed ambassador to Holland, in which situation his conduct gave great satisfaction. Many of Fenelon's other relations were happy imitators of his virtues. The abbé de Fenelon, may be particularly mentioned. After a length of years, uniformly devoted to religion and virtue, he retired to Paris, and spent the remainder of his life in endeavouring to procure a religious and moral education for the poor Savoyard boys, with whom, under the antient government, Paris abounded. Allowing himself no more than was necessary for his mere subsistence, he contrived, with the remaining part of his income, and, with the contributions which he raised upon his friends, to accomplish this edifying work.—The horrors of the revolution forced him from it, and he retired to the delightful solitude of the Mont St. Valerian. He was pursued to his retreat, and conveyed to the prison of the Luxembourg;

he was then in his eightieth year.—When this became public, all the little Savoyard boys assembled, and went in a body to the National assembly : they loudly petitioned the assembly for his liberty : and offered, that any number of them should be constituted prisoners in his stead, as hostages for his good conduct. This, for a time, delayed his fate : but a day was at length fixed for his execution. One of the poor Savoyards, whom the abbé had instructed and assisted, was, at that time, turnkey of the prison of the Luxembourg. Perceiving his benefactor among the victims led out to execution, he sprang forward, and in a state of distraction, strained him in his embrace, and cried aloud, “ My father ! my father ! are you then going to die ! You, whose life has been an uniform act of goodness ! ” “ Be comforted,” the abbé said to him, “ death is not an evil to him, who can no longer do good. My dear child, your sensibility at this moment, comforts my heart. Farewell, my friend ! farewell,



Joseph ! think sometimes upon me.”—  
 “ Alas !” answered the poor savoyard, “ I shall never forget you.” The abbé ascended the fatal cart, with sixty-eight other victims. He exhorted them, during the whole way, to sorrow for their sins, to confide in God, and to offer up to him, with resignation, the sacrifice of their lives. Having arrived at the guillotine, he once more addressed them : he exhorted them to form, with all their hearts, in an act of repentance for their sins : all of them humbly inclined their heads ; he pronounced over them the words of absolution ; and continued to suggest to them sentiments of religion, till it was his turn to submit to the instrument of death.

Notwithstanding the disgrace of Fenelon at court, his virtues attracted the friendship of many respectable persons ; among them, his first biographer, the chevalier Ramsay, deserves particular notice. It has been mentioned, that he was preceptor of the children of our James the second, and that

he spent several years in the family of Fénelon. He afterwards obtained leave to return to England, and presented himself to receive an honorary degree of doctor of laws, at the university of Oxford. On the day of his installation, two members of the university opposed his election, on the ground of his former connection with the princes of the Stuart family, and his religious principles. The celebrated doctor King, advocated his cause. Artfully passing over his connections and religion, he mentioned, with due praise, his writings, and observed that they breathed the purest principles of religion and virtue : then addressing himself to the audience, he told them, he had the honour to present to them the disciple of the great Fenelon ; and that title, he said, answered for every thing. This address almost entirely disarmed the opposition ; upon a division, the chevalier was elected by a majority of eighty-five voices to seventeen.

In the disputes on the subject of jansen-

ism, Fenelon appeared several times in print, against the disciples of Jansenius : but, though he combated their errors, he left them in quiet. The duke de St. Simon observes, that throughout the whole diocese of Cambray, the jansenists were unmolested by the archbishop, and gave him no trouble. At that time the head of the jansenists was father Quesnell, an oratorian. In answer to a letter, which he received from the father, Fenelon writes to him as follows : “ I thank you from the bottom of my heart, for all your civilities. Though I have never had an opportunity of seeing you, or had any correspondence with you, I recollect with pleasure, the desire you expressed, some years since, of paying me a visit at Cambray. I wish you would now put this design in execution. I should receive such a mark of your confidence with the most religious fidelity, and the most sincere attention. I should make it a point never to introduce into our conversation, those subjects on which we differ, except

it should be perfectly agreeable to yourself. Yet with your permission to mention them, I should hope to shew you, with the book in hand, how much they, who profess themselves the disciples of St. Augustin, are opposed to his real doctrine. If we could not bring ourselves to agree upon the points in question, we might, however, give an example of a dispute, carried on without any breach of charity." This appears to be the true language of religion. These amiable overtures of peace to father Quesnell, were the more worthy of praise, as Fenelon considered the jansenists as dangerous enemies of the church. In a letter to the duke de Beauvilliers, he says, "As to the provincial letters of Pascal, I think the prince should read them : in fact, sooner or later he will read them. His curiosity, his taste for entertaining books, and the great reputation of the letters, will not suffer him to remain long in ignorance of them. But I wish all possible precautions should be taken, that he should know what measure of truth they

contain, and not be seduced by the appearance of truth, which these letters wear. Part of the memorial, which I send you, furnishes an antidote against the two first letters of Pascal. It is more than sufficient to shew the hidden poison of the letters, and to prove that, in her censures of jansenism, the church does not combat a phantom."

Still it is among his flock, that Fenelon appears to most advantage ; in every sense of the word he was their father. His establishment and stile of living, were suitable to his public situation ; but far beneath the scale of expence and shew, which even good men would have thought justifiable. This left him an ample income, but it sunk under his acts of beneficence. His principal attention was directed towards the labouring peasantry ; he appears to have felt strongly the hardship of their lot. A curate complained to him, that, after the evening service of Sunday, his parishioners, in spite of his remonstrances, would dance ; " My

dear friend," replied Fenelon, "neither you nor I should dance; but let us leave these poor people to dance as they please; their hours of happiness are not too numerous."

During the contest for the spanish succession, the diocese of Cambray was often the theatre of war, and of course experienced the cruel ravages of advancing and retreating armies. Under these circumstances, Fenelon frequently made visitations of every part of his diocese: and all the writers of his life mention a singular mark of homage, which was shewn, on those occasions, to his eminent virtue. "From their high respect for his character," says M. de Bausset, "from their general admiration of Telemachus, and possibly from a secret wish of revenging the archbishop of Cambray, against the injustice of Lewis the fourteenth, the hostile armies permitted Fenelon to visit every part of his diocese. The English, Germans, and Dutch, rivalled the inhabitants of Cambray in vene-

ration for the archbishop. All distinctions of religion and sect, all feelings of hatred or jealousy, which divide nations, disappeared in his presence. He was often obliged to have recourse to artifice to avoid the honours, which the armies of the enemy intended him. He refused the military escorts which were offered him, for his personal security in the exercise of his functions; and, without any other attendant, than a few ecclesiastics, he traversed the countries desolated by war. His way was marked by his alms and benefactions, and by the suspence of the calamities which armies bring. In these short intervals, the people breathed in peace, so that his pastoral visits might be termed the truce of God."

In one of those visits he met a peasant, still young, but plunged in the deepest affliction. He had recently lost a cow, the only support of his indigent family. Fenelon attempted to comfort him, and by giving him money to buy another, allevi-

ated his sorrow ; still, he had lost his own cow, and the tear continued to fall. Pursuing his journey, Fenelon found the very cow which was the object of so much affliction ; and like the good shepherd, he himself drove it back before him, in a dark night, to the young man's cottage. " This," says the cardinal de Maury, " is perhaps the finest trait in Fenelon's life. Woe to those who read it without being affected ! "

" The virtues of Fenelon," continues the cardinal, " give his history something of the air of romance : but his name will never die. To this moment ; the Flemminders bless his memory, and call him the good archbishop."



## CHAP. XVI.

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*THE LATTER YEARS OF THE LIFE OF FENELON :  
HIS DEATH IN 1715.*

YEAR after year, Fenelon continued in this noiseless tenor of well-regulated, and edifying virtue, beloved and revered by his whole diocese, and by every person, to whom his wise and exemplary conduct was known. Still the indignation of his royal master against him continued unabated : the court was shut against his relations ; his friends, with the exception of the duke of Beauvilliers, and the duke of Chevreuse, were discountenanced, and it was generally understood that the name of

Fenelon was never to be pronounced at Versailles. But nothing could weaken the duke of Burgundy's attachment to him. The preceptor and the royal pupil corresponded frequently, and when, in 1702, Lewis the fourteenth gave the duke of Burgundy the command of the army in Flanders, the duke petitioned him, with great earnestness, that he might be allowed, in his passage to the army, to see Fenelon; the monarch consented, with an express condition, that their interview should be public. The duke apprized Fenelon of the circumstance by an affectionate letter. When the courier who carried the letter to him arrived at Cambray, Fenelon had left it, from a motive of delicacy, not to put himself, unasked, in the way of the duke. They met at a public dinner, at the town-house of Cambray; it is evident that they were observed, and every thing passed in great ceremony. Once or twice, Fenelon said something to enliven the conversation, but it did not succeed.

According to etiquette, he presented the duke, at the end of dinner, with a napkin to wipe his hands : the duke received it, returned it to him ; then raising his voice, loud enough to be heard by all persons present, said to him, “ I am sensible, my lord archbishop, what I owe to you, and you know what I am.” They met once more ; but letters passed frequently between them. Nothing can be more affectionate than the letters which the duke wrote to Fenelon. “ My love of virtue,” he writes in one of them, “ continues, and I think, gains strength ; but I have many faults. Do you assist me with your advice, and prayers ; in mine, you come every day ; but you will easily suppose I don’t pray for you in a very loud voice. I say nothing of my dispositions in your regard : they are always the same. If the abbé de Langeron is at Cambray, say to him a little kind word from me, but recommend silence to him.” Fenelon’s letters to the duke abound with good advice.

“ Religion,” he writes him, “ does not consist in a scrupulous observance of little forms, but in the steady observance of the duties proper for one’s state ; a great prince is not to serve God in the same manner as a hermit, or an obscure individual. I must tell you the truth ; the public esteems you, respects you, forms great hopes of you, and wishes to see you without fault : but the public thinks you stern, timid, and scrupulous, and that you have not the talent of uniting moderation and firmness in your decisions. Shew them they are mistaken : if you wish that religion should be honoured, let your’s be simple, accommodating, sensible, noble, enlightened, proper for your rank. You cannot regulate the court or the army, as you might a religious community. I am glad you see, by your own experience, what war really is ; how much it is to be dreaded ; how the greatest armies often prove unserviceable ; how easily the most splendid monarchies are shaken ; how rigorously princes, in the midst of

the incense of their flatterers, are censured by the public. While despotism abounds with ways and means, it acts with more proptitude and energy than a limited monarchy; but, as soon as the ways and means begin to fail, it sinks for ever. When despotism becomes bankrupt, how are you to expect that the venal herd, who have fattened so long on the spoils of their country, will, by their exertion in her support, expose themselves to ruin. Should you ever come to the throne, you should wish to be the father, not the master of your people. You should know that all were not made for one; that the one was made for all, and to work for the happiness of all."

One is at a loss, whom most to admire, the preceptor, who so eloquently taught, or the royal youth, who so willingly listened to these excellent lessons.

It appears, that, for the duke's information, Fenelon committed to paper the heads of a project for remedying the abuses of the french government. He evidently saw

that the time was come, when public opinion called loudly for an intermediate body between the monarch and the people, to attach them more to each other, and to increase the general interest of the public in the welfare of their country. With this view, Fenelon suggested an assembly of the notables ; and for this suggestion M. de Bausset thinks Fenelon requires an apology ; and he accordingly makes an elaborate apology for him.

The humanity and attentions which Fenelon shewed to the sufferers in the war in Flanders, endeared him to the whole nation. “ Charity,” says the duke de St. Simon, “ was among Fenelon’s most striking virtues : it embraced equally, the rich, the poor, his friends, and his enemies. He found frequent occasions for the exertion of it in the crowds of the wounded and sick, who, in the wars in Flanders, were carried, in great numbers, to Cambray. He was regular in his visitations of the hospitals, shewed constant attention to the

lowest officers, and generally, during their illness, lodged a considerable number of the principal officers in his palace. Like a true shepherd of Christ, he watched continually over their spiritual welfare. The fine manners which his habits of high life gave him, attached them to him, and none of them ever had occasion to repent of the confidence which he reposed in Fenelon. In sickness, and in health, they always found him willing to listen to their humble confessions, and anxious to replace them in the path of virtue. If the lowest person in the hospital requested his attendance, Fenelon never refused his request. Their corporeal necessities were equally an object of his compassionate zeal. Broths, meat, physic, comfortable food of every description, and always of the best kind, were sent them in well regulated plenty, from his palace. Fenelon presided at the consultations of the physicians, with the tender concern of a warm and kind friend. It is impossible to conceive how greatly he became the idol

of the military, and how Versailles, in spite of her stern master, resounded with his name. It happened that the commissariat was in extreme want of corn for the troops : the archbishop emptied his granaries for their subsistence, and refused to be paid. On that occasion, Lewis the fourteenth himself became his panegyrist. His charity and polite attentions extended equally to the prisoners of war, as to his countrymen. In all he did, there was an indescribable propriety ; the true episcopal character appeared in it ; and virtue herself became more beautiful, from Fenelon's manner of being virtuous.

The death of the dauphin, advanced his royal pupil to the rank next the throne ; and the good effects of the education he had received from Fenelon, were then perceived by all. From that moment the duke appeared to be every thing which the nation wished. He threw off his reserve ; did the honours of the court with majesty and gracefulness. His easy, instructive,



and well adapted conversation, charmed the better kind of courtiers, pleased every ear, gained every heart, shewed his talents, and the use which it was to be expected he would make of them. He was never wanting in attention to birth, to age, to natural or acquired endowments; it is wonderful, with what rapidity he gained universal esteem, admiration, and love. The joy of the public made it the theme of every conversation. Is this the man, they asked, till lately so reserved, and unaccommodating?—The dukes of Beauvilliers and Chevreuse answered, He is the man; he is the very man we always knew him to be; but the time is now arrived, when it is proper for him to unfold his real character; and, such as you now see him, such you will ever find him.

It will easily be supposed, that, from this moment, all the attention of the courtiers, veered to the acknowledged friends of the duke of Burgundy. The dauphin died in April, and that very spring revealed

at Cambray, to the happy and delighted flock, the change which had taken place at Versailles, in their pastor's regard.— Cambray immediately became the general road to the army of Flanders; every person of rank, who served in it, found some reason for passing through Cambray, and prolonging his stay there, as long as he could find a real or pretended cause.

But the hopes, which the duke of Burgundy raised, he was destined not to realize: he died in 1712, and was regretted by the whole kingdom. His eyes were scarcely closed, when Lewis the fourteenth ordered that his papers should be brought to him; he examined them with minute and anxious attention, and burned them with his own hands. Madame de Maintenon informed the duke de Beauvilliers of this circumstance: she adds, "I am sorry they are burned; nothing so beautiful or so good was ever written: if the prince, whose loss we deplore, had some faults, it was not because the councils given him,

were feeble, or because he was too much flattered. Well may we say, that those who keep the strait path shall not be confounded." One important manuscript, the *Directions for the Conscience of a King*, happened to be in the hands of the duke de Beauvilliers, and thus escaped the flames. Every line of it breathes moderation and virtue ; every line censures ostentation, inordinate love of glory, thirst of conquest, injustice, luxury, yielding to flattery, and the wish of absolute power. It was not printed till several years after Fenelon's decease, when a superb impression of it was printed by the marquis de Fenelon, then ambassador at the Hague. The court of Versailles took the alarm; and peremptorily ordered the marquis to suppress all the copies: he obeyed the order, preserving two copies of it only; one of which found its way to the library of M. Gaignat, and is noticed by De Bure. A surreptitious edition of it was published at the Hague in 1747; in 1774, it was

published at Paris, with the express permission of Lewis the sixteenth.

WE are now arrived at the term of our biography:—and we cannot close it better than in the words of the duke de St. Simon: “Fenelon,” says the duke, “survived his disciple two years. Neither in the life time of the prince, nor after his decease, did a word once escape Fenelon, which shewed regret for what he had lost, or a wish concerning the future. Concentrated in his pastoral duties, he died, if the expression may be allowed, in the field of honor: Returning from an episcopal visit, his coach was overturned; no one was wounded, and he himself run no particular danger: but the shock was too great for his feeble frame. When he arrived at Cambray, he was feverish, and in a few days, was beyond the reach of remedy. During his whole illness, he appeared insensible to what he quitted, and occupied only with the thought of what he was going to find.

Penetrated with the most lively sentiments of religion, he placed his soul in the hands of God, with a resignation full of confidence and humility. He wrote a letter to the king, containing no request for himself, but earnestly recommending to him, the wants of his diocese.—Lewis the fourteenth declared, on perusing the letter, that he had never read any thing more affecting, or more worthy of the last moments of a bishop. Fenelon died at the age of 65, in the arms of his friends, and his clergy, mourned by all his diocese, equally lamented by catholics and protestants.—To complete his eulogium, he left behind him, neither debt nor money.”

THE END.



## APPENDIX.





## APPENDIX.

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### NOTE I.

#### *On the reunion of christians.*

A VIEW of the fatal effects which religious animosity has produced in the christian world, has often made wise and peaceful men endeavour to reunite all denominations of christians in one religion. With this view, at an early period of the reformation, Melancthon formed his celebrated distinction of the points in dispute between the roman catholics and protestants, into the essential, the important, and the indifferent:— in a later period of the reformation, Grotius, the most learned man of his age, employed the last years of his life in projects of religious pacification : towards the end of the seventeenth century, a correspondence for the reunion of the roman catholic and lutheran churches was carried on between Bossuet on one side, and Leibniz and Molanus on the other : it may be seen in the benedictine edition of the works of Bossuet, and Mr. Dutens's edition of the works of Leibniz. In the beginning of the last

century, a similar correspondence, for the reunion of the roman catholic and english churches, was carried on under the direction, or at least with the connivance of cardinal de Noailles and archbishop Wake: a full account of it is inserted in the last volume of Mosheim's ecclesiastical history. With a view of facilitating this reunion, doctor Courayer wrote his discourse on the validity of english ordinations. A curious history of the controversy, to which that treatise gave rise, is contained in *Commentatio historico-theologica de Consecratione Anglorum Episcoporum*, ab Olao Kiorningio, 4to, Helmstadii, 1739.

That such men as Melancthon, Grotius, Bossuet, Leibniz, and Molanus, should engage in the project of reunion, is a strong argument in favour of it's practicability; that it failed in their hands, may shew that it is more than an herculean labour, but does not prove it utterly impracticable. It is evident, that at one time more than another, the public mind may be more disposed to peaceful councils, and to feel the advantage of amicable explanation:—

“ The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decayed,  
Lets in new lights through chinks which time has  
made.”

WALLER.

Through the flaws and breaches, the yawning chasms, (as they are termed by Mr. Burke,) which

the events of the times have made in the civil and ecclesiastical institutions of almost every country, a flood of light seems to break in, and to point out to all, who invoke the name of Christ, the expediency of a general exertion in defence of their common christianity.

In many of the essential articles of the christian religion they are already agreed. All christians believe, 1st. that there is one God; 2d. that he is a being of infinite perfection; 3d. that he directs all things by his providence; 4th. that it is our duty to love him with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves; 5th. that it is our duty to repent of the sins we commit; 6th. that God pardons the truly penitent; 7th. that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, when all mankind shall be judged according to their works; 8th. that God sent his son into the world, to be its saviour, the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him; 9th. that he is the true Messiah; 10th. that he worked miracles, suffered, died, and rose again, as is related in the four gospels; 11th. that he will hereafter make a second appearance on the earth, raise all mankind from the dead, judge the world in righteousness, bestow eternal life on the virtuous, and punish the workers of iniquity.

In the belief of these articles, all christians, roman catholics, lutherans, calvinists, and socinians are

agreed. In addition to these articles, each division and subdivision of christians has its own tenets. Now, let each settle among it's own members, what are the articles of belief, peculiar to them, which, in their cool deliberate judgment, they consider as absolutely necessary that a person should believe, to be a member of the church of Christ ; let these articles be divested of all foreign matter, and expressed in perspicuous, exact, and unequivocal terms ; and above all, let each distinction of christians earnestly wish to find an agreement between themselves and their fellow christians :—the result of a discussion conducted on this plan, would most assuredly be to convince all christians, that the essential articles of religious credence, in which there is a real difference among christians, are not so numerous, as the verbal disputes and extraneous matter in which controversy is too often involved, make them generally thought.

## NOTE II.

This account of quietism is principally taken from Bossuet's *Instruction sur les Etats d'Oraison*, and from two works of very opposite characters, the *Memoirs Chronologiques et Dogmatiques du Pere d'Avrigni*, and Jurieu's *Traité Historique, contenant le Jugement d'un Protestant sur la Theologie Mystique*,

sur le Quietisme, et sur les Demelez de l'Eveque de Meaux, avec l'Archeveque de Cambray.

### NOTE III.

For many of these details we are indebted to a letter, which M. de Bausset has published, from M. le Dieu, the secretary of Bossuet, to madame de Maisonfort. Some time after Bossuet's decease, M. le Dieu, whose family resided in the neighbourhood of Cambray, spent a day with Fenelon, by his desire, and appears to have been highly pleased with his reception.—He mentions in his letter to madame de Maisonfort, that, after supper the conversation turned on the recent death of Bossuet, and that he was asked, whether in his last illness, Bossuet had received the sacraments of the church,—by whom they were administered to him,—who prepared him for death. “I thought within myself,” says the abbé, “that Fenelon, who put the last of these questions to me, recollected at the time, what had passed between them, and supposed that Bossuet stood in need of a good confessor.”

Without a fuller investigation of the conduct of the contending prelate than the writer has been able to bestow on the subject, it would be presumptuous in him to pretend to assign to them their exact degrees of blame, (for blameable they both were), in their personal hostilities. It seems evident to the

writer, that Bossuet had a just, a kind, and a generous mind, and that much of what appeared reprehensible in his conduct towards Fenelon, was owing to the violent councils of the cabal of the duke de Maine, who were jealous of the party attached to the duke of Burgundy, and likely to enjoy his exclusive favour if he should come into power. Of that party, Fenelon was confessedly the head: it was therefore the interest of the cabal to effect his ruin, and unfortunately for Bossuet, they made him, unknown to himself, the instrument of their designs, and thus drew him by exaggerated representations of the danger of the church from Fenelon's writings, into measures equally repugnant to his natural judgment and feelings. Bossuet left behind him the character of great ignorance in common affairs. Fenelon was allowed to possess great knowledge of men and manners; and, notwithstanding his sublime spirituality, Fenelon had probably a much greater knowledge of the affairs of this world, than his serious and severe adversary.— Besides, in extenuation of Bossuet's violence, it should never be forgotten, that, in the main object of the controversy, he was perfectly in the right.

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